HM

THE HARD MUSIC MAGAZINE

The Famine
Red
Becoming The Archetype
Underoath poster
Blindside
Stryper
Readers' Poll Awards
SXSW Festival Recap

HASTE THE DAY

"OUR BUCKETLIST IS COMPLETE"

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If you want to see Newsboys, Chris Tomlin, Casting Crowns, Skillet, TobyMac, Third Day, or Mercy Me this summer, you are in luck!

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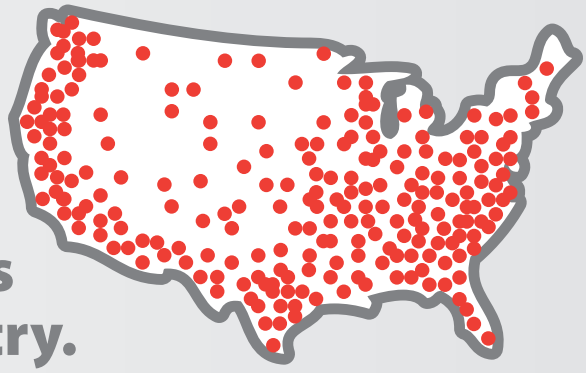

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From the editor

Doug Van Pelt

QUEEN SAID IT BEST

Do you know the song? The chorus repeats: "It's late, it's late, it's late ... it's not too late." Like most deadlines, this one takes a lot of energy to finish. It's been insane trying to do just about every job this magazine requires and be "homeschool dad" for our kids and prep our house for a sale. We decided to downsize, which is another adventure (moving) that's about to unfold. Since the last issue we have announced our move from bi-monthly frequency to quarterly. You'll notice that the cover month dates will change from Jan/Feb to Apr/May/June. If you subscribe, your subscription will continue on and you will get all the issues you signed up for. You can track this by going by issue # instead of calendar date. If you signed up for a year's subscription in the past (which was six issues then), you will still receive six issues. It'll just take a year-and-a-half to fulfill.

We also rolled out a new ad campaign (called "the whole kitchen sink"), where advertisers that buy print ads in HM will get every single "new media" tool we offer online (like banner ads, email blasts, online surveys, twitter, podcast and much more). It looks like it's working and HM will rock on in print. We also just recently funded a new kickstarter campaign – the HM Army shirt – which will help us promote our newest addition to the HM Magazine line: the app. We have negotiated with a Japanese company (pray for the folks in that country), who will develop an app for each issue from here forward of HM Magazine. These will be for most all the popular platforms out there – iPhone, iPad, Android, etc. Be on the lookout for that in places like the iTunes Store in the coming months. That should be really cool and promote growth.

Festival season is almost upon us. If you see someone with HM at one of the fests, please come say hello. Also, consider helping out with our Street Team. We will be trying to expand HM Magazine's scope from here on out.

We can't really predict the future or guarantee anything, but with your help and the grace of God it looks like HM Magazine is going to peek its head out the other side of the crushing blows this economy (plus the advertising and music industry woes) has hit us with.

Welcome to this special digital edition of HM Magazine. You'll notice more color (because we can) and extended coverage (starting on page 63). Enjoy and tell others.

SPINNING AT HM NOW

VARIOUS ARTISTS	*The Power of the Riff..*	A tough best-of Rowe Productions metal comp.
SERYN	*This Is Where We Are*	Beautiful, lush and quiet melodies. RIYL M&S.
JIM LABRIOLA	*Heart Improvement*	Lots of laughs during this deadline. A good thing.
VARIOUS ARTISTS	*Hardcore Aerobics*	A tight & fun punk comp for hxcChristian.com
I AM EMPIRE	*Kings*	Melody is king on this hard-hitting release.
DAVID BAZAN	*Strange Negotiations*	More entertaining than sad for departing insider.
VARIOUS ARTISTS	*The Killing Fields*	An intense intro to new label, Warclub Records.

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Letters to the Editor

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Play mainstage at cornerstone (done)
Play Warped tour (done)
Play The Egyptian room in Indy (done)
Sell out the Egyptian room headlining (done as of 07/09)
Play Verizon Wireless Amphitheater in Nashville, TN
Be played on X103 (done)
Get the cover of HM (probably never)

HAIL! HAIL! HASTE THE DAY!

Thank you so much for running HTD on the cover. They deserve it. Great guys, great songs, great career! The final show in Indy was incredible and emotional. It was an honor to be able to attend that show. To see all the original guys back & to see how strong the new line-up became. Fantastic! I'm going to miss these guys!
–Bonnie Carnes, via email

Ed – It definitely feels fitting to give the band such a "proper" send-off. Great guys. Great band.

A CRABBY RESPONSE [2]

I disagree with the premise that Christian art is by and large below par or average. First of all, art is subjective, example: some people think what Brittany Spears does is good art. Also what qualifies something as Christian art? Does it have to be a picture of Jesus or is it any picture that happened to be painted by a Christian? And I would submit to you that percentage-wise art produced by Christians is far superior to the crap that this world esteems as art, example: 90% of all movies, pop music or pop culture art in general. According to Mr. Crabb (March/April 2010 Lifestyle section) "You, Doug Van Pelt, should check out *Zombieland*." I guess this is some of the art Mr. Crabb considers quality. I would suggest that all of the energy and thought Mr. Crabb has put into this extended article could be better used. In general, Mr. Crabb, my brother in Christ – as my dad used to say, "Don't be so artsy fartsy."
–Douglas Chad Butler, via email

Ed – Thanks for sounding off, Douglas. You've raised some good questions, but I respectfully and strongly disagree. Please keep reading.

GOING QUARTERLY

I think your decision to go to four issues instead of six is a good one. And I think the decision to do the iPhone app stuff is also a good one. Great ideas!
–Brian Bortree, via email

KICKSTARTER MY HEART

Sweet. Let's do more of these! Get that rag out one way or another. Digital, paper or beam it from space. HM. News. Interviews. And Reviews. Rock on forever...
–Allan Stallard, via internet

Ed – Thanks, Allan. Appreciate your help making the kickstarter campaign so successful.

APPLY THIS

I really would like to see a concert listing on your app! Where you could put in your zip code and all the concerts around you would pop up. There could be a 25, 50, 100, 200 mile radius on it, too. Just some thoughts. Thanks for all you're doing to promote Christian Rock!!! God Bless!
–Jeremy Sherman, via email

Ed – Great idea. We'll explore that idea and see how feasible it would be to pull off.

A LIST OF SUGGESTIONS

I've been a subscriber for a little over a year. I was wondering if you had room to entertain the thoughts and suggestions of an outside observer. There are a few things I've tended to notice about HM that I've wished were a little different. Firstly ... more color photographs ... Secondly, I've found that some of the writing doesn't go deep enough for my taste ... the same time that you featured a cover story on Underoath there was a coincidental feature in Alternative Press. Both articles mentioned the departure of Aaron Gillespie, of course, but AP got more in-depth ... Their piece went to Gillespie for comment on the break-up, the new UO album ... Thirdly, I have noticed that many of HM's covers and features are about what I refer to as "growl bands." Sure, speed, death and grindcore all have their fans and they should not be denied. However, there is such a vibrant, burgeoning happening of melodic Christian hard-rock right now ... Bands like TFK, Skillet, P86 and Superchick, the emergence of brilliant sophomores like Decyfer Down, Children 18:3 ... and a host of promising entries like The Letter Black and Sent By Ravens. I know you've written about many of these, but sometimes it seems like it's in passing and/or in the minority ... You may want to consider giving it more coverage and tilting the scale a little less towards the Cookie Monster ... Finally I think it would be awesome if you included such samples of the bands you write about ... and this might boost circulation. I know this could be costly, but perhaps it's something to think about for when, God willing, HM is able ... May God's blessings and His hand continue to be upon you and your work!
–Matt Smutko, via email

Ed – Great, thoughtful and constructive criticism, Matt. I always appreciate that. Thanks!

HM

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SCRIPTURE "The lions may grow weak and hungry, but those who seek the Lord lack no good thing." (Psalms 34:10)

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HARDNEWS
Quick & concise

JUMP SHIP QUICK!
METAL LABEL ADDS PUNK OUTFIT

Roxx Records have signed its first punk band, Jump Ship Quick! Jump Ship Quick is a brand new outfit featuring former members of Focused and Ultimatum! "Fans of bands like NOFX and The Crucified are going to love their approach to the old school vibe reviving that classic punk sound and attitude and mixing in a little modern day twist." And Jump Ship Quick are sure not afraid to speak their minds and tell it like it is as you will hear in some of their very politically charged lyrics! Jump Ship Quick consists of Harry (Vox and Rhythm Guitar), Jeff (Lead Guitar), Greg (Bass) and 'J' (Drums). Jump Ship Quick actually began about 6 years ago when Jeff and J began putting together a few songs just for fun. The debut album (*Bow*) will be produced by famed Five Iron Frenzy saxophonist 'Jeff ' the girl (aka Leanor Inez Ortega Till).

AIN'T NO GRAVE RECORDINGS
NEW LABEL LAUNCHES

Inspired by the old spiritual, "Ain't No Grave (Can Hold This Body Down)," ANGR is a new label developed by Ryan Downey and Ryan "The Dog" Nelson, with Century Media distribution. The label "is dedicated to working alongside the most engaging Spirit-filled bands from deep within the heavy music underground whose ambitions reach beyond simple scenes. A collection of individuals with diverse approaches and points of view but a shared overall vision. Not every band evangelizes, but none will compromise the heart of what they're doing." The first two signings are: Sleeping Giant and The Great Commission.

FM Static returns with fourth studio album

The infamous counterpart to Thousand Foot Krutch (FM Static) released their fourth studio project, *My Brain Says Stop, But My Heart Says Go* at press time. "It's funny because every artist is excited about their new record and there are a lot of cliché things people say like it's their best work yet, but this was honestly such an inspired process and it all came out so naturally," notes McNevan of the instantly infectious batch of tunes. "I'm a sucker for a big hook and this record zeros in more on that top 40 side than in the past, but we didn't go in with any intentions or hidden agendas. This isn't a concept record, it's more of a highlight reel of moments and situations in my life." *My Brain Says Stop, But My Heart Says Go* is firmly planted in present tense, urging listeners to not be afraid to step out in faith without worrying or feeling weighed down by a sagging self-esteem or less than ideal circumstances. In other words, seize each day and make the most of every moment.

News bullets

War Of Ages has re-signed with their longtime label home, Facedown Records. The talented metal band will be heading into the studio this fall to record for an early 2012 album release. They will soon be announcing US summer tours to go along with their headlining European summer tour, including some Euro fests. They will also be appearing at Cornerstone and Sonshine Festivals on Facedown Night. "I am beyond excited to continue our relationship with War Of Ages," explains label head Jason Dunn. "I view them as a flagship band for Facedown and one of the hardest working bands in metal today."

Paramore has been added to several Warped Tour dates. Joining the revamped Paramore lineup are bands like **The Devil Wears Prada**, **Relient K**, **August Burns Red** and **Family Force 5**.

Texas In July will be releasing their new album, *One Reality* on April 26th. Their sophomore full-length album and Equal Vision Records debut was produced by Zeuss (Hatebreed, Shadows Fall) this past winter. They are joining August Burns Red, Set Your Goals and Born of Osiris on tour this spring, followed by the 2011 Take Action Tour with Silverstein, Bayside, Polar Bear Club and The Swellers.

For Today released a new video (for the song "Seraphim"). They're doing a short run through Mexico in May.

Fallstar just released its debut album on Come&Live! (easily the heaviest thing on the label thus far).

Strike First Records signed LA hardcore band **Dynasty**. Their upcoming debut album will be called *Truer Living with a Youthful Vengeance*.

Burlap To Cashmere is back after a 10-year hiatus with "a brand-new, stripped-down sound that's true to the artists they were inspired by: Simon & Garfunkel, Bob Dylan, Van Morrison."

Skillet released a new digital EP called *Awake and Remixed* back in March.

Two weeks prior to a month-long tour with **Fireflight** T&N's **Hyland** had its trailer and gear stolen.

Get late-breaking news once a week! Sign up for the HM e-mail list at hmmag.com

Industry Profile: Anchor Drum Co.

HM MAGAZINE WELCOMES BACK AN OLD REGULAR FEATURE, WHERE WE HIGHLIGHT SOMEONE IN A RELATED FIELD OR MUSIC BUSINESS. MEET BRIAN SOULE OF ANCHOR DRUMS.

What is the vision of your company?
Brian Soule: Our main purpose as a company is to create something that will change lives. Creating a drum that will challenge a drummer to play harder, push them in their songwriting, and hopefully excite them to give it their all when playing live! Hopefully, through all of this we can help make a difference to drummers. What makes me smile is hoping that the drum will be used in a song that someone will hear and that song will be the one that changes their life. That is what keeps me building drums!

How did the company start?
I have been tinkering with drums since I was in college. Always painting, re-wrapping, cutting them down and just trying to change them up. I always got bored with the same kit and wanted something that looked different than what anyone else had. I eventually started refinishing vintage kits, then started buying old kits and completely re-doing everything from shells to hardware. Finally a couple of years ago a friend kept saying I should give it an official shot and start a company. So, after lot's of prayer, research, designs, and many late nights, Anchor Drums was born.

What do you think sets you apart from other drum companies? What do you do different (or hope to do different)?
When we sat down to come up with ideas for this company, I really wanted to build drums that had a unique look to them. Everyone's build was different, but when you saw it, you would know it was an Anchor Drum. Being a big vintage drum fan, I wanted something that could hold up to modern music, but had a slight touch of vintage class to it as well. I also wanted to use various styles of hardware that you didn't normally see. In the vast sea of drum companies it is difficult to be noticed and be "different." But, we decided to only use two lug styles to give ourselves a brand. So, we only use our full length tubes and ball lugs. There are other lugs that everyone uses and look great, but we want to be set apart. Also, instead of solely using Keller shells for everything, we like to use other companies. We have been strictly using Gladstone shells, but also work with Vaughncraft, Erie and some smaller companies that make some great shells! As for the sound, we work with the drummer to tailor it to suit their musical needs. I would say the Anchor sound is big, full, and boomy!

What drummers are you working with now?
We have been lucky to work with some great drummers so far and we are thrilled to have them on board with us! Josh Mace (Sumerlin), Ryan Patterson (A Jasey Project), Josh Douglas (This Armistice), Andy Butcher (The Cast & Crew), and Dave Rich (Polar War). We are talking with alot of great drummers right now as well! Super excited about adding to the family!

What amazes you about certain drummers?
Creativity. I love seeing and hearing drummers that break away from the normal standard. Drummers that push the limits of what a drum kit should do and really making it an art form. Some of the best drummers I have seen and heard are completely self taught. Sometimes learning your own way to play certain styles, beats, and patterns can really make a drummer sound and look very unique.

Owl City is heading out on a massive US headlining tour in mid-June.

Eisley is also heading out on a six-week US headlining tour at the end of April.

Reunion Records have signed a pop/rock band, **Anthem Lights**. The band's self-titled debut album hits May 10th.

A Past Unknown just signed to Red Cord Records and will release its new album (*To Those Perishing*) in June.

Future Destination Records have released a new album by **The Apprentice**, titled *Oh the Slavery Comfort Brings*.

Switchfoot's seventh studio album, *Hello Hurricane*, received a GRAMMY Award for Best Rock or Rap Gospel Album.

Australian metal label Soundmass signed **Terraphobia**, (a project by **Mortification** guitarist **Michael Jelinic**) who are releasing *Evilution* soon.

Former T&N punk band **Upside Down Room** is back with two new albums with SoCal indie label pop.vox.music. *Let's Go For a Ride* is a six-song EP of all new Upside Down Room songs.

Mychildren Mybride released a new video for the song "King of the Hopeless."

As They Sleep just did a video for the tune "Oracle of the Dead."

One of **Brooke Waggoner**'s songs ("Fresh Pair of Eyes") was featured on a recent episode of *Grey's Anatomy*.

Melodic arena rockers **Cry Holy!** signed to Intense Millennium.

Believer will be releasing a new album on Metal Blade soon, its second CD since re-uniting in 2009.

Call To Preserve are disbanding this year.

Figure Four is re-uniting to play Seattle's Rain Fest in May.

Lust Control has reunited for a Cornerstone performance & some Texas dates (gasp!)

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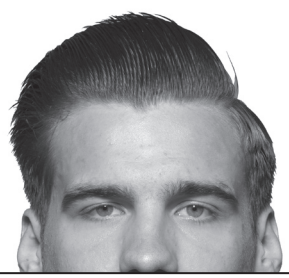

Life with the Holy Spirit is an everyday effort to put ourselves into a place of surrender, to listen to His voice, and to experience His presence. May this encourage you and edify you as children of God. Here we go:

A quick note on faith: Faith is trust and trust is the foundation of relationship. When the Bible says we are saved by faith, it is talking about being saved by relationship with God. Now read the following in light of this understanding of faith.

King David said in Psalm 26:1, "...For I have led a blameless life," he is also the man who said in Psalm 24:3&4, "Who may ascend the mountain of the LORD? Who may stand in his holy place? The one who has clean hands and a pure heart, who does not trust in an idol, or swear by a false god," and in Psalm 26:8 he said, "I love your sanctuary, Lord, the place where your glorious presence dwells." He was familiar with things of God that only blameless men could be familiar with. How?

He recognized that he could not live by his own righteousness. He must possess someone else's righteousness. Someone worthy.

A Messianic prophecy in Jeremiah 26:3 says, "And this will be his name: 'The Lord Is Our Righteousness.'" This is referring to Christ and that we would survive by claiming and owning the righteousness He offers. The kind of righteousness that comes by faith in relationship.

As David looked forward to God's promise of a sin-destroying Messiah, He knew better than to rely on himself; his hands were far from clean (1 Chronicles 28:3), and his life far from blameless (2 Samuel 10), but he had placed his trust and hope in the righteousness that was yet to come. This is why David was chosen and called "a man after God's own heart." It was because he understood that trust was most important to God and he was justified because of it.

We must understand that even on our best days we have earned nothing and Christ has provided all. In Colossians 3, the Apostle Paul makes reference to Christ as "our life." I want to propose that in relationship He has become our past, our present, and even our glorious future. He is the way into the kind of relationship with God that we can say honestly, "I have lived a blameless life," for Christ has become my life.

Love always trusts.

INK ON INK

It's been a long time coming, but we're going to stick our neck out and cover some tattoo art. Here is some body art on Alexis Brown, from Straight Line Stitch. She's in a mainstream band (which tours with a lot of HM bands) and she's outspoken about her faith and her tattoo art reflects that. They're going to be on the Rockstar Energy Drink Mayhem Festival from July 9th - August 14th (tickets on sale now at rockstarmayhemfest.com). See our online edition for an expanded interview and spread. [Photos by Dan Rosenthal | *doitlivephotography.com*]

"Some of my favorite pieces are part of my whole tattoo theme in which I call 'Dark Christianity,' because all my tattoos represent my strong belief in God, but they're also very dark, almost gothic in a way."

LIVE REPORT

South By Southwest 2011

March 11-20

REVIEW & PHOTOS BY DOUG VAN PELT

(Austin, TX) This year's 10-day film/fashion/interactive/music marathon of a conference/festival was bigger than ever. I recently heard a local news broadcast discussing the Police Commissioner's thoughts on the event, which put the number at 200,000 people that came downtown to enjoy the event (thanks to free shows and the crowds already here, it brings out the locals in droves). While crowds mean longer lines sometimes, this journalist is glad to report that it was another awesome event.

There were plenty of films that wove spirituality into the plot this year. Some could say practically all of them did, but some standout movies included the slow-developing ***New Jerusalem***, ***Catechism Catacylsm*** (a psychedelic trial of faith trip), the "help a stranded alien" flick ***Paul*** and the wacky ***Super***. SXSW suggested to documentarian Alan Berg to put one together on their own conference, which celebrated its 25th anniversary this year. ***Outside Industry: The Story of SXSW*** was an entertaining, balanced and informative piece.

The music kicked major butt and was full of tough choices, like, "Do I see Eisley or Smoking Popes? Viva Voce or The Appleseed Cast?" But that's life. **Invisible Target**, **And the Greatest of These**, **The Famine**, **Before There Was Rosalyn**, **Firstborn from the Dead**, **The Shiny Darks** and **The Brigade** all rocked the HM Mag Showcase on Wednesday. Once again BTWR was amazing, as was the ferocious metal of The Famine. The Brigade was intense, too.

Denison Witmer, **Damien Jurado** and **Viva Voce** all got down to the business of music at the same club and stuck to it for full, passionate sets. They each played new and old tunes, all of which went over well and wetted appetites for upcoming releases.

Tooth & Nail's showcase was another jam-packed event that allowed staying put for the better part of the night (unless you can't help but wander off to catch Doug Pinnick's new band with members of Pearl Jam, called **Tres Mts.**). **Rocky Loves Emily** were tight and easily got the crowd to sing along to their new tunes. The frontman for **Sainthood Reps** had that serious expression on his face most of the night – like his music was important, relevant and had to get out.

Turns out he was right. **The Almost** frontman Aaron Gillespie worked the crowd like he *was* the longtime friend that he is to so many. It was quite glorious in the sweaty rock and roll sense of putting out and keeping the crowd involved. **Emery** practically climbed off the tiny stage in both the front of the indoor crowd and the railing that separated the giant open window out into the crowded sidewalk of music fans. Their new and old tunes exploded with non-stop energy.

It's hard to explain what it's like to experience this massive event, but imagine the festive atmosphere of Mardis Gras meets a music fest with over 75 venues all concentrated into one area (but without many bad attitudes to spoil the fun). That's SXSW. Come next year.

[*See elaborate and intricate descriptions of all things SXSW under the "Hard Music Exclusives" tab at hmmag.com*]

Clockwise from top: The Brigade; The Almost; Before There Was Rosalyn; Denison Witmer; Damien Jurado.

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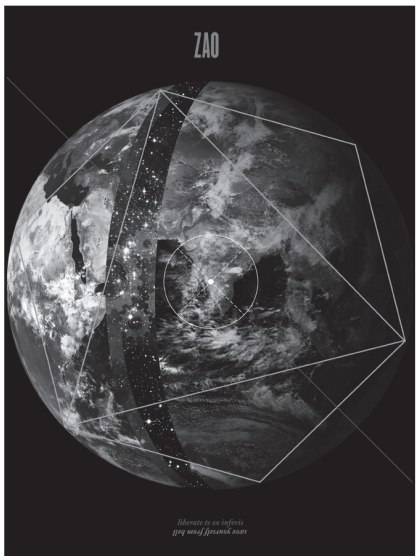

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Album: *Anthem Songs*
Label: BEC Recordings
Release Date: March 8, 2011
RIYL: The Almost, Leeland, The Glorious Unseen

aarongillespie.com

AARON GILLESPIE

What path leads a 14-year-old drummer from being told that his skills aren't very good (and his playing too loud) to being voted HM's 2008 Favorite Drummer while with metalcore band Underoath to fronting successful alternative rock band The Almost … to a definite (and still loud) call to worship? Apparently, that path goes through Africa.

Aaron Gillespie was that teen when he joined fellow church member guitarist Luke Morton in Underoath. As he later blogged, "I just knew I was young and had an incredible opportunity to play as fast as I could, which was super fun."

After some eight releases, two Grammy nominations and line-up changes that left him as the only remaining original member, Aaron left Underoath in 2010. The internet was alive with rumors about the breakup.

"There is no bad blood, there is no anger, I was in that band for eleven years, I love every person with my whole heart, I love the music we made together, the shows we played and the good times we had," Aaron blogged at the time. "People change, times change, and sometimes change just comes hunting for you."

Now, he admits, "God had been calling me to do it for years, but I was having too much fun." He says it was absolutely the right decision for him.

He had already formed The Almost as a side project and released 2007's *Southern Weather*. While The Almost is still a part of his life, Aaron is currently touring to promote his first solo effort *Anthem Song*. Tooth & Nail Records calls it "an honestly ragged, often rocking praise and worship set."

It was during a 2010 Compassion International mission to Uganda that Aaron experienced the epiphany leading to leaving Underoath and putting together *Anthem Song*. "I had this thought the trip would change me. Yet five or six days in – you see all you thought you'd see – but I didn't feel this big shift," he explains. "Then we went to this church service. You could feel the Spirit of God down the road. I mean, 2,000 Ugandans praising God like nothing I've ever seen before."

Deeply touched, he asked God, "Why don't we have that here? And I felt God telling me, 'Because you worship me circumstantially, based on what you have." Aaron noted the Africans, who are so poor and needy, worship God just because He exists. God reminded him, 'I made you to worship me.' He says, "I always wanted to do a worship album. But I got caught up with everything that was going on and I kinda wasted my influence."

Of this tour, Aaron says, "I've never gone out with just one thing in mind: That's to make Jesus famous. That's what this is about. It's been crazy. In the last three to four weeks we've seen 900 people come to Jesus." He adds, "The Bible says 'Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.' (Matthew 6:33) We quote it, we believe it; but we never buy into it and do it."

Aaron does. He spoke while preparing for an outdoor acoustic set in Corpus Christi, Texas. He says this tour is an economical one, playing mostly colleges and churches and doing some of the driving himself. "We're not going out entitled," he says of his current path in life.

In fact, in March, while driving all night between tour dates, he posted this down-to-earth Twitter at 7:55 am: "Ran out of gas, walked to gas, battery dead. Rode in back of cop car to buy jumper cables".

At least the worship tank is full.

BY STARLA POWELL KUBINSKI, FULL ARMOR OF GOD MINISTRIES

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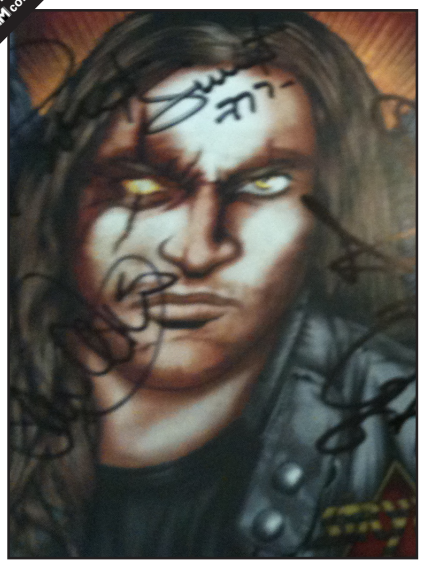

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"WHAT'S TURNING OUT TO BE THE SUMMER ALBUM YOU'LL WANT TO OWN, "IN CHARACTER" BY BLOOD AND WATER PUTS THE BAND UP AGAINST THE BEST ELEMENTS OF 90'S ALT-ROCK AND MIXES IT IN A BLENDER WITH EQUAL PARTS MELODY, HOOK DRIVEN HARMONIES, AND BLAZING GUITAR WORK AKIN TO BANDS LIKE EVERCLEAR, LIT, EVE 6, THIRD EYE BLIND, 311, FIVE IRON FRENZY, GOLDFINGER, SMASH MOUTH, AND NEW BANDS LIKE WEEZER AND MOTION CITY SOUNDTRACK. ...YOU WON'T FIND A MORE ADDICTIVE ALBUM TO LISTEN TO IN QUITE SOME TIME."
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"THE WHOLE ALBUM WILL KEEP YOU HANDS OFF - THERE'S NO NEED TO SKIP THROUGH OR SONGS TO TRY TO FIND A GOOD ONE. TURNS OUT EACH SONG ENCOMPASSES THE UTMOST HIGHEST QUALITY OF SOUND AND DESERVES A LISTEN. IN CHARACTER ENTERTAINS A COMBINATION OF STYLES AND COULD EASILY BE CLASSIFIED IN MULTIPLE GENRES (PUNK, PUNK ROCK, SKA AND ALTERNATIVE). WITH CAPTIVATING LYRICS AND DANCEABLE HITS, IN CHARACTER WOULD BE A GREAT ADDITION TO ANY COLLEGE HOUSE PARTY PLAYLIST. ACTUALLY, HAVING BLOOD AND WATER PERFORM LIVE AT A COLLEGE HOUSE PARTY WOULD BE EVEN BETTER, BUT WE CAN'T ALL BE THAT LUCKY."
-ROBIN, 52 BANDS IN 52 WEEKS

"WITH A COLLECTION OF SONGS THAT GET STUCK IN YOUR HEAD AFTER REPEATED SPINS, IN CHARACTER IS ONE OF THOSE ALBUMS THAT WILL BE ENJOYED FOR A LONG TIME."
-SHAWN ANDERSON, CHRISTIAN ROCK 20

"BLOOD AND WATER CRAFTED A WELL-BALANCED, INTERESTING ALBUM WITH MATURE, INSIGHTFUL LYRICS, INTERESTING RHYTHMS, AND INTRICATE MUSICAL LAYERS. 'IN CHARACTER' WILL PLEASE EXISTING FANS AND NEWCOMERS ALIKE; THESE BOYS HAVE TALENT THAT WON'T BE OVERLOOKED."
-JENNY BAUER, ALTER THE PRESS!

"BLOOD AND WATER IS GROWING UP. I'M NOT JUST TALKING ABOUT THE GRADUAL IMPROVEMENTS, ENHANCEMENTS AND MATURITY GAINED FROM THEIR SELF-TITLED 2008 RELEASE TO THEIR FOLLOW UP, "IN CHARACTER", THAT PRODUCES SOME OF TODAY'S BEST SKA AND PUNK INFLUENCED POP ROCK. WHAT I'M REALLY TALKING ABOUT IS AN ALBUM WHERE WE CAN LISTEN TO SONG AFTER SONG THAT EACH DEAL WITH A MAN'S PERSONAL STRUGGLE IN LEARNING HOW TO BECOME A MAN OF GOD AND SHEDDING THE THINGS OF HIS YOUTH ALONG THE WAY."
-TYLER HESS, CMZ

EDEN-RECORDS.COM

eden RECORDS

Album: *The Great Campaign of Sabotage*
Label: Facedown
Release Date: February 1, 2011
Members: Jason Stinson; Jason Bowen; Thomas Washington; Jon Strunk; Nick Greenwood; Jarrod Norris
RIYL: Overcome, Converge, Unbroken

myspace.com/overcome

OVERCOME

I heard about Overcome in high school from the Christian hardcore kids I hung out with. I remember getting the first two Facedown Record compilations, and they where on there. I did not really get into them 'til a few years later, when I gave my life to Christ. They quickly became one of my favorite bands. I never had the chance to see them live. I did get to see Jason and Ethan's new band, Indwelling – a three-piece death metal band. With the loss of their label Clenched Fist Records, and Ethan quitting, Indwelling went into limbo. So Jason and vocalist Thomas started a band called Shadowen. Shadowen was short-lived ... that is until Jason Dunn put out Indwelling's record in 2003. They played one show with Sinai Beach and Symphony in Peril at the showcase. That was the last time I saw Jason Stinson and Thomas do anything. Then, out of nowhere, Jason and Thomas started playing music again. First it was going to be a whole new band. Then I heard they where going to call it Overcome.

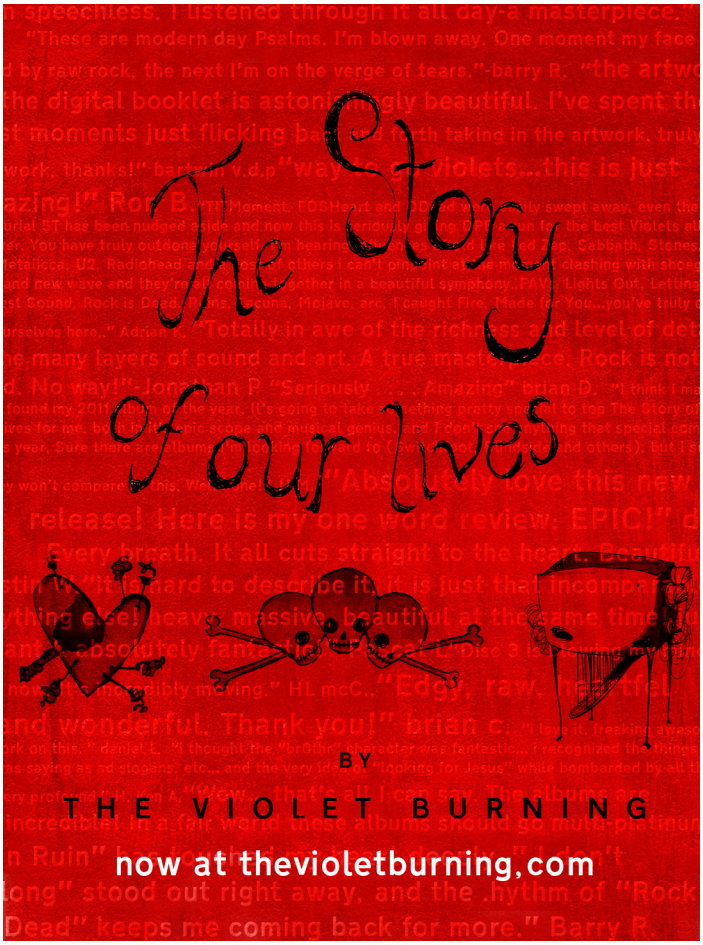
I was stoked to say the least. Many bands over the last few years had come back for reunions, like Focused, Unashamed and The Crucified. Even with some of the pioneers reuniting, they only played a few shows. Not Overcome, this was no reunion but "more of an evolution of Overcome. What we would probably sound like had we stayed together over the past 10 years," says Stinson. When asked, "Why come back as Overcome and not a new band or one of the bands after?" Stinson replied, "After kicking around a few names, we realized that the equity in the name Overcome would give us opportunities we wouldn't have otherwise. It was the best choice for us."

With Jon Stunk being the youngest in the band. I was wondering if it is like a Jedi training his new Padawan. "He actually didn't have much metal experience when we first got together. Honestly he is amazing, though. He gets better every time we practice. I met him when he was 15 and knew he would be a beast on the kit someday."

Being a part of the first Spirit-filled movement and coming back in the middle of the new wave, I wanted to know what the man of wisdom had to say. If we are making the same mistakes as we did ten to fifteen years ago. Or are we doing things better this time around? "I really don't know if things are better or worse. There are some legit bands doing great things today, just as there were in the past. We all need to check what we do against Scripture. The Bible is sufficient for any and every issue. I've seen what I think may be stretching biblical truths for a good show. It's also sad to see what seems to be a competition among bands. We should be lifting each other up and supporting each and every band. Thank goodness God is in control of even our faults and He is growing us everyday."

Knowing Jason wrote all the music in all three bands, I asked him if he used any older songs on this new record. "Most of the songs are new. As we were learning songs, we re-worked a couple old songs that meant a lot to me from Overcome or other projects and put them on the record. It's a new generation of people getting our record. There were a few songs I wanted to breathe new life into."

BY ROB SHAMELESS



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Album: *Ad Astra Per Aspera*
Label: Gotee
Release Date: March 8, 2011
Members: Jeremy Spring, vocals/guitar; Brad Foster, guitar; Nick Patrick, bass; Brian Scheideman, drums
RIYL: House of Heroes, Faulter, Kings of Leon

myspace.com/abandonkansas

ABANDON KANSAS

If Jeremy Spring and the rest of Abandon Kansas can maintain the control on their music they've held since the beginning, aiming for the stars is an understandable goal. The theme behind the band's latest Gotee Records release, *Ad Astra Per Aspera*, speaks to that very hope of ascending to something great, and the band is willing to work for it, both spiritually and musically.

"The title is *Ad Astra Per Aspera* and that's the Kansas state motto, which is where we're from," says Spring, the band's vocalist. "It's kind of a concept record about where we came from and also about where we're headed. That motto means 'to the stars through difficulty.' I think the mental image we were going for is that the stars are whatever you're shooting for – for us that's heaven and God's presence – but whatever it is, you have to go through some junk to get there. Life is very much like a storm and it's unpredictable yet it's also beautiful. So all of the songs have to do with the stars or heaven and the journey it takes to get there."

The tangible journey for Abandon Kansas was an impressive one even in the band's independent days. Touring up to 300 dates a year is an incredible number for a veteran band, but the determination and widespread appeal gave Gotee, along with other labels, exactly what they were looking for in a young band.

"We waited for a long time to sign a deal and team up with someone that we wanted," says Spring. "We wanted to maintain our artistic integrity in a way that we were comfortable with, but we also wanted to have the opportunity to do things we couldn't do by ourselves. If we were going to give up something, it needed to add something we weren't already doing. We had offers from Christian labels and secular labels and Gotee was the first to come alongside and not ask us to change anything."

Spring insists the band still holds to its independent roots when it comes to creative control. In fact, it's surprising just how much the band still keeps in-house.

"Even though we're signed with a label, we're still independent in a lot of ways," explains Spring. "We still book our own tours. We design our own merch and artwork. We write all of our own songs and we're also self-managed. So we still do a lot of stuff on our own. Gotee has really just enhanced what we were doing, such as working with [producer] Mark Lee Townsend or the promotional opportunities or video shoots. Honestly, I've got no complaints. The staff at the label is incredible and they've never pressured us with any numbers. They just want us to make good art, and that's what we're trying to do."

Abandon Kansas is definitely ready for a higher profile with a firm label footing, an incredible new disc and a relentless tour schedule. But rather than focus on sales or YouTube hits, Spring says the goals have stayed the same since the beginning.

"We try not to set goals about record sales or any of that since it's out of our control. So we just set our own goals on what we can control. We write what we want to write. We play it as well as we can live. We want to play live as much as we can. And then we want to connect with the people who come to our shows. Those have always been our four goals, whether 100 people or 1,000 people come to our show. By putting the goals on our own selves, it's made our calling that much more fulfilling."

BY MATT CONNER

Circuit Rider

rock & roll missions thailand

Greetings from Chiang Mai, Thailand

My name is Gary Lansdowne. My wife and I are with Youth With A Mission, which is an international, interdenominational Christian missions organization. I have been a volunteer with YWAM since 1991; my wife since 1994. The main emphasis of what we do is Music Outreach and Mercy Services. My wife is also an English teacher.

One of the best forms of communication with the youth is through music. It crosses all language and national differences. There have been so many incredible opportunites to go to places where people would not expect this kind of message. Clubs, bars, prisons, military bases, open-air stages, festivals, etc. In most of the venues we are asked the same question: "Why do you come to a place like this?" The answer is simple: "This is where Jesus would come."

Most people think of a "missions trip" as going to another Country and visiting an orphanage, building a school or church. These are wonderful things to do and we have been part of some of these things. Being a carpenter, painter, plumber, teacher or doctor are incredible gifts that help so many needy, less fortunate people in many countries.

Since 1996, we have helped various Christian rock bands from 14 Countries play in 10 different Nations. Most musicians we have worked with you probably would not know. The best known artists that we have had the privledge of working with is Blindside (Sweden), Andy Hunter (UK) and Disciple (USA).

Thailand is a mostly Buddhist nation with a population of over 65,000,000 people. 70% of this population is age 35 and under. Christians make up 1.65% of the population. The average per capita family income is $8,000 USD.

I am asking you to consider being a part of a Music & Missions outreach. Because of the Internet, MTV and myspace, you can hear the same styles of music played in the Americas, Europe and Asia.

You will not make any money and most people will have no idea of who you are, but you would have an opportunity to touch young people with the love of God.

We are also involved with serving the Burmese refugees on the Thailand/Burma border. One week a month, we travel to Mae Sot and volunteer with a Burmese Migrant School. We have been able to go into the Mae La Refugee Camp which is home to over 48,000 people.

If you are interested in how your band can be involved with a Music & Missions outreach in Thailand, please contact us at: **circuitryderrock@gmail.com**

For other info: **www.myspace.com/circuitryder**
Thailand phone number: 0066-847712831

Album: *Cardboard Box*
Label: Grrr
Release Date: June 2011
RIYL: Robert Cray, Tom Waits, Bob Dylan

grrrecords.com

GLENN KAISER

Glenn Kaiser is one of the founding fathers of Christian Rock. He has produced many projects and continues with his latest album: a concept album about the homeless. He discusses how this project has affected his life and the lives around him.

"The working title (and it's working only at this moment) is *Opportunity Dance*. (and since this interview was changed to *Cardboard Box*). It's about a person, who's now living in a shelter, off the street and they have the basic necessities: food and a roof over their head. They are down the road a bit in their journey and recognize there's some sort of plan and order to things and that there is love in the world.

"It's like a summation song. The last song on the project is called 'Hold Me,' which is a cappella: simply a prayer. 'Opportunity Dance' may show up right before that song. A lot of the songs on this project are either from the first-person perspective of what it's like to think like a homeless person (or) from the perspective of how people look at you when you're homeless and poor. How people do make judgments, because you don't have an address. And that is what a lot of lyrics on this project deal with."

To write these songs, Glenn didn't go out to live like the homeless, but he does know first-hand the type of judgment passed on to the poor (working or non-working) class that he grew up in.

"We were in a stint of poverty for 3-4 years in Wisconsin. This was back in the days when welfare was a major stigma. My father quit a very lucrative job and was offered a better-paid, managerial position. He refused that position and started his own local business; so he could be home with his wife and kids more. My family were not Christians, outside of the cultural sense. After a year, his partner ran off with all the money, and his business went down the tubes overnight. Right after that, my father ended up in the hospital. My mother, committed adultery, divorced my father and the whole family totally fell apart, which poverty played a big role in. We could not have survived as a family without welfare from the government, hunting and fishing, and the kindness of our neighbors. In some ways, I lived more like an African American in the South than a white kid in the North.

With your experience over the years with JPUSA, I'm sure you've had countless experiences and inspirations for this album. What are some of the stories over the years and people that have inspired this particular album?

"This particular guy was a chef in one of the biggest downtown Chicago hotels. His mother ended up with cancer. They had spent every dime on treatment and finally ended up begging every government agency for help. This guy, finally exasperated, didn't quit his last job until his mother died. One day, he showed up at work and lost it. Threw his hat off, utensils down, tossed his apron on the ground and walked out. He didn't care about the money anymore and was through paying taxes. He was done supporting any government and basically checked out of the American middle class culture entirely. He believed the system was, in part, responsible for his mother's early demise.

"I ended up hearing the gospel through this guy. I told him, I might take the same exact position you have taken, if it hadn't been for the real love of a church. However, I don't think this position you take is going to do anything but ultimately destroy you. But, I understand. I asked if I could pray for him, and then I never saw the guy again. There have been a number of situations just like that.

"The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing. We talk about love, mercy, and compassion, but when it comes to the poor and homeless, there is a cultural persuasion of stereotypical judgments. My response is that a human being is someone's relative with a name and a story."

How You Can Get Involved

Glenn continues to explain his "deepest motivation is the person of Jesus Christ." He believes in the work he's doing with Cornerstone Community Outreach and encourages his supporters to go online at ccolife.org and get involved. 70% of all proceeds go directly to CCO. Glenn is "convinced we can make a difference besides talking" for the homeless. His mission is to bring people to the Bible, and his focus for the album is to raise money for these people. "This is a chance for the church to be the church."

BY LINDSAY PARAMORE

Skynet is self-aware.

The guys in **RED** have the future on their mind. They just released their third album, *Until We Have Faces*, played back-to-back TV shows – *Conan* and *Tonight Show with Jay Leno* – and been on a run with the *Winter Jam Tour*, but they're setting their faces like flint toward the headlining tour they have coming up in the summer.

"We want to make sure that what this record is about is being displayed on stage," relates guitarist Anthony Armstrong. "We've always been a very theatrical band, so we've always tried to bring that element to the stage and making sure people can see that we're tying everything together as far as what we were talking about when we wrote these songs and giving them an opportunity to see it visually, but also feel like they're experiencing it the same way we are."

The band is about ready to shoot a video for the album's lead-off track, "Feed the Machine." The band was tapped to come up with the treatments for it. "The elements that we came up with for that we're going to try to incorporate that into the stage live setup. You'll see a lot of the very industrial gears turning, the yellow beacon lights, grinders throwing sparks and all kinds of stuff on the stage. Just kind of bringing to life that whole idea...

"Overall, the face that's pushing through the front of the actual record sleeve is just talking about how people are trying to emerge out of that faceless state – that kind of emptiness we see a lot of people out here experiencing. You know, they're trying to fight through all that and establish their own identity. So, just bringing that to life on stage and giving them something that's impactful – kind of a fourth dimension. More or less tying the whole record together."

Judging by the ease and thoughtfulness of Armstrong's responses when asked about the album's theme of discovering our identities and struggling to be ourselves, it is apparent that this direction came to the band organically and that they've put no small time into dissecting and understanding it.

"We've all gone through this stuff," he explains, "like in high school. It's a very difficult and very vulnerable time. Our drummer, Joe (Rickard), is 23 and he's still close to that experience and still coming into his own for the most part. Discovering that is very difficult and a lot of people take the path of least resistance and they kind of take on the worldly ideals of, 'I need to look like this. If I don't look like this, I'm not important, I'm not relevant.' Those are the things that are destroying people and basically turning people into monsters. Now more than ever you're seeing a lot of that.

"I think the first step in all of that is discovering that that's happening. Realizing and admitting and getting away from the whole denial of the situation and saying, 'You know what? I'm just not living the way God intended, more or less. From the start, you probably had your own goals and this and that, but a lot of people take that path that's simple and they get away from what was truly their plan of attack and turn to someone else or they discover that first part that they're a different person and not who they want to be and they can go from there.

"I wouldn't brag, because it's not a very easy thing to do, but we do a lot of touring – anywhere from 250 to 300 dates a year and we see a lot of people and we see a lot of things and we experience a lot of people's situations and a lot of people write to us and we talk to our fans as much as possible and we try to stay as plugged in as we can. And that's what we're seeing out there. The people are just kind of ... they don't have a grasp on what it is they're supposed to do with their life. Rather than try to hold on to something and fight for it, they kind of take on everybody else's. 'I wanna do what they're doing. I wanna be this person. I wanna look like this person. I wanna act like that person.' They're kind of this empty vessell of a person.

"The reason we wrote this record was to be like an empowerment for those people, like give them an anthem. Give them something they can listen to and have that musical element that kinda ties it all together and gives them that sense of, 'You know what? This isn't what I wanted. This isn't what I set out to be or do. I wanna be something else and something that I decide rather than someone else deciding for me.' That's basically the whole element behind this record – people discovering who they are."

While it's admirable for an artist to have a laser focus like this on a lyrical theme and a message that they want to get across, it's a lot easier to pontificate about these things in an interview and another thing to communicate the same message when they're in the grind of a tour. Red gets beyond that in a very practical and down-to-earth way. They empathize with their audience in an as real a way as possible – they use the music to escape.

"The day itself can be difficult, but once we're on stage, that's what it's all about. At that point, that hour and 15 minutes we play, that's the escape from everything. The people that show up to see us play, we want that to be their escape, too. We all have to live this life. We all have to be a part of every day. I think that's a lot of the reason why people gravitate towards music – specifically music like this – is because it is an empowerment for them. Rather than escape into drugland or alcohol-land or whatever your vice may be, they're clinging to this music because of how it makes them feel and how it inspires them. I think that that's what happens for us, too. Just because we're the band doesn't mean we don't get up there ... we're just as inspired by the music that we're making. It's giving us an opportunity to escape, too. I think people can see that when we perform. It's a very emotional situation for us to be in every night. No matter how many times we've played the songs or how exhausted we are, when the lights go down, it's time. Regardless of what's happened during the day – people are going to get the same experience every single night."

✖

Red (L-R): Anthony Armstrong, Randy Armstrong, Michael Barnes, Joe Rickard
Photo By: Joseph Anthony Baker
For more on Red (including a podcast interview), go to **hmmag.com**

WE'RE JUST AS INSPIRED BY THE MUSIC THAT WE'RE MAKING.
IT'S GIVING US AN OPPORTUNITY TO ESCAPE, TOO.
I THINK PEOPLE CAN SEE THAT WHEN WE PERFORM.

BY DOUG VAN PELT

AN INTERVIEW IN THE MIRROR: THE FAMINE ON THE FAMINE.

If you could give everyone in the band a nickname, what would it be and why?
Jonny would be "Buzz Killington," because he is the worst. He's a lethal combination of boring and not self aware, plus he's a bass player. Andy would be "Pope Andy the Pious," because he has been alive since 381 AD and he can often be found wearing a decorative headdress. Mark would be "Robert Boyle," because he is an alchemist, and was born in a castle. Also, he is turbo white. I would be "Highlander 2," because there can be only one, and because I was married to Brenda Wyatt Mcleod before her untimely ozone layer related death.

What happened to Chris? His vocals were better, plus he loved Jesus more!
He felt compelled to join a nunnery (guys can do that too, turns out), because playing in a death metal band really hampered his hourly genuflection. Also, our ultimate goal is to turn into a soft rock band, and he didn't fit well into that picture.

Hey Nick, what happened to Dr. George Tiller on May 31st, 2009, and why do you think that happened? Also, do you happen to have any personal commentary on the matter?
Well Nick, I'm glad you asked. On May 31st, 2009, Dr. George Tiller was shot through the eye and killed during a church service at his church, Reformation Lutheran Church, in Wichita, Kansas by Scott Roeder, a religious anti-abortion activist. I am not the man who murdered Dr. Tiller, so I cannot speak with any degree of certainty as to the motive of the killer. However, if I were pressed to employ circumstantial evidence and Mr. Roeder's own words, I would conclude that the doctor was murdered because he provided late-term abortions, a completely legal practice to which Mr. Roeder was vehemently opposed.

BY NICK NOWELL

It is somewhat serendipitous that you inquired regarding my feelings on the matter, because I do happen to have a few paltry words to offer. In my opinion, when we vilify those with whom we disagree, we only vilify ourselves in the process. I believe Voltaire once said, "Monsieur l'abbé, I detest what you write, but I would give my life to make it possible for you to continue to write." When we enforce a black and white worldview with violence, ignorance and hatred, we do far more harm to ourselves and our respective messages than we do good. My belief is that intellect is the currency of our future, and my deepest hope is that we can divorce ourselves from the black market dealings of blind indoctrinated foolishness, and grow to, at the least, tolerate a world whose values are incompatible with our own. Progress or stagnate, the choice is ours and ours alone.

How would you describe the current state of The Famine and your new record to someone unfamiliar with your work?
I would call us "The Arlo Guthries of Death Metal, except for that we aren't witty or talented." We do all love Alice's Restaurant, though.

You guys seem like you had all kinds of fun before Jonny joined the band. Do you have any cool tour stories?
No cool tour stories, but I do happen to have the lyrics to "Farewell Andromeda" by John Denver handy. Ahem-

"Welcome to my morning
Welcome to my day
I'm the one responsible
I made it just this way
To make myself some pictures
See what they might bring
I think I made it perfectly
I wouldn't change a thing

Welcome to my happiness
You know it makes me smile
And it pleases me to have you here
For just a little while
While we open up the spaces
Try to break some chains
And if the truth is told
They will never come again

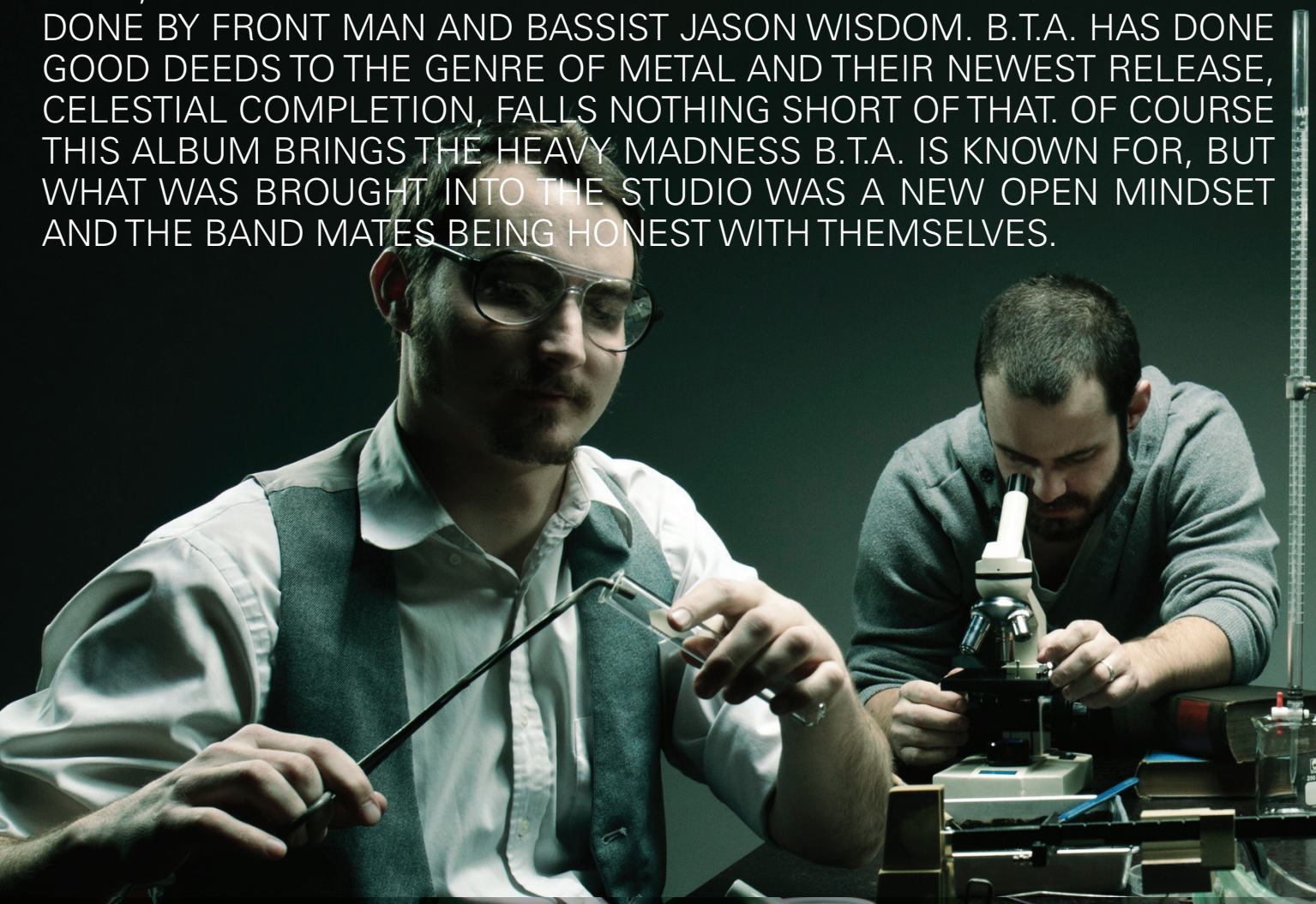
Welcome to my evening
The closing of the day
I could try a million times
Never find a better way
To tell you that I love you
And all the songs I play
Are to thank you for allowing me
Inside this lovely day

Welcome to my morning
Welcome to my day
Yes, I'm the one responsible
I made it just this way
To make myself some pictures
And see what they might bring
I think I made it perfectly
I wouldn't change a thing"

There is no need to be combative, sir. Do you have any closing words?
Thank you for your readership. Remember the Alamo, and free the West Memphis Three.

✖

BECOMING THE ARCHETYPE HAS ALREADY SHOWN THEY CAN'T BE BARGAINED OR RECKONED WITH. IT'S RARE THESE DAYS TO SEE A BAND THAT HASN'T COMPROMISED THEIR MUSICAL STYLE TO KEEP UP WITH CURRENT TRENDS OR GAIN BIGGER FAN BASES. EACH ALBUM PREVIOUSLY RELEASED BY B.T.A. HAS GUARANTEED HEAVY TECHNICAL RIFFS, THUNDER BOOMING DRUMS AND THAT MONSTROUS VOICE DONE BY FRONT MAN AND BASSIST JASON WISDOM. B.T.A. HAS DONE GOOD DEEDS TO THE GENRE OF METAL AND THEIR NEWEST RELEASE, CELESTIAL COMPLETION, FALLS NOTHING SHORT OF THAT. OF COURSE THIS ALBUM BRINGS THE HEAVY MADNESS B.T.A. IS KNOWN FOR, BUT WHAT WAS BROUGHT INTO THE STUDIO WAS A NEW OPEN MINDSET AND THE BAND MATES BEING HONEST WITH THEMSELVES.



"We realize we aren't the toughest and most brutal guys, so instead of playing that out I said 'Let's just be nerds.'" Guitarist and keyboardist Count Seth, explaining the album writing process. "All of us are nerdy guys. We like listening to Weird Al, reading books, playing video games and live action card games. The name of the album is based on an 'End of the world' theme and even with that being said, there is still a light shine of hope."

With these epic science fiction visuals, the band still was able to connect Scripture ties about having spiritual completion through one's self in a world of darkness and chaos. The front cover of *Celestial Completion* presents that idea with a bright figure rising up when all hope seems lost. The artwork was done by Dan Seagrave who also did the front cover of *Terminate Damnation*, along with other works done for Demon Hunter and The Devil Wears Prada.

Having not held anything back in their world of nerdiness, song lyrics range from riding a motorcycle through space to there being a iron hand summoning a corpse from the bottom ocean floor. The path B.T.A. took for *Celestial Completion* was to take the music seriously and not themselves.

"This has been just a whole atmosphere of fun for us," Seth said. "Writing and recording songs and being who we are on tour and photo shoots. We had to leave behind the seriousness of ourselves. It's like having a new truck that's been released. It has the same basic engine and setup but you know you have extra features like seat warmers and tinted windows. We are that basic model with some advanced bells and whistles."

Celestial Completion has left a good mark on the band's reputation. You could say this album would be a living proof of the phrase "Work hard and play hard." However this process wasn't an easy one. B.T.A. experienced a dark time when *The Physics Of Fire* was released. In a way, it could be viewed as a teenager trying to find who they are in life. As a group, tensions between bandmates were high and B.T.A. was lost in finding the right image to portray.

"This was a bad time for the band," Seth said. "For *Physics* we had it all wrong. The photo shoots had us dressing in black tank tops and black jeans with serious faces on. I asked myself, 'Why are we doing this?' because it wasn't who we were. As a band we talked more than once about breaking up. Things started getting better when we started writing for *Dichotomy*. Subconsciously people can tell when you're being honest with them and now I think people are having fun with us. People have enough drama in their lives and don't need it in the music they listen to. This can be said about any form of art."

A great part of B.T.A.'s new view on life is because of their newest member. Guitarist Daniel Gailey has been a great friend to the band and had just turned 21. His youth and energy has helped the band reach their new level. Along with his guitar skills, Gailey has also recorded singing vocals with Seth in the studio. The band noticed right away that Gailey had a unique style that made it identifiable only to him.

"I don't see a version of B.T.A. in the future without Daniel," Seth said. "He's been helping us craft this atmosphere of fun we've been working towards. His style is playing unusual tricks and techniques. Daniel uses the whammy bar in unconventional ways sometimes. Besides being fast and heavy, he was able to

BY DANIEL GARCIA

do some cool solos with sound effect(s) that complemented the riffs well. To us he is like our offensive threat in sports terms," he laughs.

As being part of the B.T.A family, Gailey has been labeled as "Jason's son." With the mighty beard that Wisdom is known for, it makes him look older than he really is. This came about on tour when Gailey and Wisdom entered into a bank for a deposit. Wisdom then asked the bank teller if he could have a lollipop for his son. The teller, of course, thought of Wisdom being a great father.

Along with creating great memories on tour, B.T.A. had the opportunity of touring South Africa in 2010. Seth started to notice many fans from South Africa on the Facebook page for the band. According to Facebook statistics, South Africa is the second highest population of fans next to the United States. Seth took the action of asking fans on Facebook who he could contact to make a tour happen. This led Seth to a ministry called "Torchbearers."

"This group is about 50 members that are all in between the ages of 18 and 25," Seth said. "They do ministries in the poor communities and the squatter camps that are right outside the cities. Money was managed to pay for our tickets and the ministry was incredible between us and them. We played a total of 6 shows, which were all sold-out in 200 to 600 capacity venues. Everyone involved profited from this spiritually and financially. Torchbearers have started to build a long-awaited middle school for the squatter camps, plus we got to see African wildlife, which was awesome."

B.T.A. has scheduled some album release shows with their friends The Overseer, which is an unsigned band from Arkansas. About a month later during late April and early May, B.T.A. will do a small headlining tour with another small group called Day of Vengeance. As for summer, a lineup has not been confirmed, but a tour is being put together involving other Solid State bands.

Fans should be excited about the newest B.T.A. music video. No, boys and girls, the group isn't going to be jamming inside an empty warehouse, an open field or inside a Wal-Mart. In fact, no instruments are going to be seen in the video at all. Video Director Jimmie Myers and Photographer Troy Stains created an idea of having the band shown as characters out of an 8-bit Nintendo video game. (SEE VIDEO STILLS BELOW)

"It's going to look like something out of *Lord of the Rings*," Seth said. "The music video is so cool that you're going to forget that music is playing. This is just us showing our nerdiness with carrying torches and battling monsters."

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THE GUYS IN **STRYPER** ARE CHILDREN OF THE '70S. THEY WERE ALSO A COVER BAND BACK IN HOLLYWOOD PRIOR TO CHANGING THEIR NAME AND DEDICATING THEIR LIVES AND MUSIC TO CHRIST. IT SHOULD HAVE BEEN NO SURPRISE THAT THIS '80S HAIR METAL BAND WOULD SOMETIMES SOUNDCHECK WITH A MAINSTREAM METAL TUNE FROM YESTER-DECADE BACK WHEN THEY WERE PLAYING THE OCCASIONAL CHURCH VENUE IN THEIR HEYDAY (CIRCA '85-'87). THE REACTION WAS HORRIFICATION UPON THE FACES OF THOSE WELL-MEANING BUT QUESTIONABLE CHURCH WORKERS. THIS EXPERIENCE PUT A TINY MEASURE OF "EXPECTING THE WORST" WHEN THEY DECIDED TO RECORD THEIR LATEST ALBUM OF COVER TUNES (*THE COVERING*).

"I don't think we had any fears," frontman Michael Sweet says, in doing his best bit of self-analysis. "We're always a little concerned about alienating fans and, you know, offending people. We're one of those bands that wants to be there for everybody and we want to relate to everyone and we want to reach everyone. And you just can't do that. That's an impossibility. You can't please everybody all the time. We tried. We want to. So, we didn't want to alienate any of our fans, but at the same time we wanted to make a record that was just about having a good time and having fun. Not that the other records weren't, but they were certainly much more serious in the lyrical sense. There was more about constructing the songs and trying to pull from here and pull from there and being creative. There's a lot that goes into that. Trying to put together 12, 13, 14 original songs for a record is a lot more work. This record was just about going in and creating some fun arrangements of songs we grew up on and in the process enjoying the moment. Enjoying the process of recording and just playing these old songs that brought back memories of our teen years and whatnot and the influences that they had on us. It was really a joy doing it. It was really unique for us and we had an absolute blast doing it."

"We've got this routine down where we go into a studio, which is called The Spirit House. We have an engineer there by the name of Danny Bernini. He came from Hit Factory in New York. He's worked on tons of records. He's like a seriously, incredible, talented engineer. He's a pro all the way. He's the in-house guy there. He's worked with P.O.D. and tons of people. We go there and we live there. It's a 2-million dollar house on 18 acres out in the middle of nowhere. They board us and they feed us. They bring in people to cook for us. We just literally eat, sleep and breathe the record and that's all we do, 24-7, until it's done. It's how we did *Murder By Pride* and probably the next record and the next record and the next record. It's just a really great place. We're getting some great-sounding tracks out of there. We're very pleased with what we're able to achieve with the budget.

"It's a low budget record. I think we spent in the $20,000 range on this record, which, to make a record of 13 songs that has a good quality to it, it's a difficult task and we're able to achieve it there at the Spirit House. We've very pleased and we're on to something, definitely.

"So far we've been playing 'Heaven and Hell,' 'Over the Mountain,' 'Shout it Out Loud' and 'Carry On Wayward Son' (in concert). We're hoping to kind of switch things up a bit and mix it up live and add a couple of other covers that we haven't been playing and subtract a few that we have been playing. We just performed our fifth show last night in LA and we're playing in Vegas tomorrow night. We're just playing it by ear. The covers are great. They're really going over well live. It's probably unique to hear Stryper – a Christian band playing these songs. It's definitely intriguing."

Listen to more of this Stryper interview at podcast.hmmag.com

A time machine would be fun. Imagine if you went back and contacted Stryper in 1986 and told them that they'd be releasing a covers album 25 years later. Sweet thinks that happened and actually cites that as a reason for doing it now (not really). "I probably would have thought, 'Yeah. I can see that. Not now, but somewhere down the road, I could see our band doing that.' We grew up on covers. Before Stryper we were Roxx – before we changed the name to Roxx Regime. We were a trio. For a long time I was the only guitar player and we did covers. We played Gazzari's as a cover band and we did Priest and we did 'Breaking the Law.' We did a lot of these songs. It's nothing new for us. We cut our teeth on these songs. Then, as we went along, when we became Stryper, we used to soundcheck these songs – to a horrified group of people. I remember we would go into some of these churches and start playing a Sabbath or a Maiden song and we'd get serious grief for it. People would just be all up in arms over that. That was back in '85, '86 and '87. We started adding to the set 'On Fire' during the *Against the Law* tour and then we added 'Breakin' the Law' a couple years ago, so it's not really a new thing for us. We're proud of where we come from musically. We don't hide it because we're Christians. We don't try to run from that and say, 'Oh yeah, we can't talk about that! We're Christians now.' I don't buy into that kind of stuff. We're all about showing people where we come from. As long as we don't compromise who we are *now* and our faith and our beliefs *now*. It's okay to show people where you come from. It's a good thing. It's a good testimony."

So far the album is going over well. Movement on downloads are way up from the previous record, as is the online buzz in general. Sweet attributes it to balanced arrangements: "I think somehow we were able to go in, thank God, and achieve many times the unachievable – and that is to put your own spin on a cover and make it your own but at the same time not make it your own so much that you destroy the magic of the original. I think a lot of bands do that. They go in and they do a cover and you listen to it and you think, 'Oh man! What did they do?' So, we tried to stay true to the original arrangements and keep the vibe the originals had and yet at the same time put our own little spin on it and not so much so that people are saying, 'Oh, man! What did they do?' On most of the tracks I think we accomplished that."

Mission accomplished, indeed.

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METAL CAN BE FUN

BY DOUG VAN PELT

UNDERØATH

Photo: Travis Shinn

NEARLY FOUR YEARS DISAPPEARANCE OF THE THIS ONE WAS QUICKLY SWEDES WENT SILENT APPEARED THEY WOULD OWN. HOWEVER, THEIR BACK, AND WITH MUSIC

Once the initial relief of knowing they're safe and alive wears off, though, the question remains: Why the silence for so long?

"For me the intention of that was that you don't have to always know where the band is if there's nothing interesting happening," guitarist Simon Grenehed says. "Of course we could have reported like, 'Yeah, we're planning to go into the studio' or 'we've been in the studio and we've done a couple of songs,' but it just doesn't really say anything so I think at least for me it was intentional in that way that I wanted us to say something when we came back. Of course it's not nice to the fans, but I think hopefully it'll make up for it to come back with something that's really good."

Following their last full-length, 2005's *The Great Depression*, Blindside toured South Africa, Australia, Europe and Asia and released an EP, *The Black Rose*, in 2007. They sat down in Singapore that year to pray and discuss the future of the band.

"We felt that we're not finished yet – Blindside is not done," drummer Marcus Dahlström says. "We haven't recorded our last notes as Blindside and that's why we wanted to make another record."

For this album, they decided to return to producer Howard Benson, who helmed 2002's *Silence* and 2004's *About a Burning Fire*. But when writing stalled as they headed into the studio, they decided instead to enjoy being at home with family and to take their time writing.

"Once we passed that two-year period between albums we felt there was no rush," Grenehed says. "Once we felt the momentum was lost we decided to claim the luxury of writing until we felt we found what we were looking for."

Grenehed says the new album, titled *With Shivering Hearts We Wait*, started to come together following the writing of the uptempo "My Heart Escapes," which the band recorded as a demo and sent to Benson.

"Once we had that song we started to write differently," Grenehed explains. "I'm not sure what it is, but it feels like a bridge that we had to cross from the stuff we'd written up until now. I like the structure of the song and it feels like anyone who listened to the band at any time will get this song."

But that begs the question, with each Blindside album or era having a somewhat different sound – the harshness of *A Thought Crushed My Mind*, the more mainstream rock of *Silence*, the almost jazziness of *The Great Depression* – which era would come out alive in a cage match?

"There are a few fists of fury on every album to get in the ring with, but naturally *A Thought Crushed My Mind* is the feistiest of the lot," Grenehed says. "However, all the albums burn with passion so any one could stand up for a good fight in my mind. Naturally we'd love to bring this new album as the ultimate contender, being the good old underdog and take out the others with experience and freshly brewed excitement. We know all the tricks in the book by now and have studied previous opponents closely. I think *WSHWW* would take it."

The new album has elements from previous releases, including a meandering, blistering song à la *Silence* in "There Must Be Something in the Water," to a more lighthearted, dancier song unlike anything prior in "Monster on the

AGO, A DISAPPEARANCE OCCURRED – A MAGNITUDE OF AMELIA EARHART'S, YET FORGOTTEN. LIKE EARHART, THIS GROUP OF AFTER CIRCLING THE GLOBE, JUST AS IT ACHIEVE A NEW LEVEL OF SUCCESS ON THEIR STORY HAS A HAPPY ENDING. **BLINDSIDE** IS THAT BELIES THE FACT THEY WERE EVER GONE.

BY COREY ERB

Radio," which features an '80s hip-hop-esque drum-machine sample.

"I think people who have followed this band know that we don't follow patterns," Grenehed says. "This is the longest time we've had between recordings and thus we've had an opportunity to go in one direction and then throw it out the window and start over. The new album is the end of a five-year search for the right songs according to our hearts. It's up to anyone interested to look into our new world and see if they feel it or not."

Lead singer Christian Lindskog adds: "All music has been done already, but when you feel like you're making the right song for the right time in your life it doesn't need to be like extravagant, crazy. It [can] just be like it's the right song in our life right now and it just sits right with you."

After 16 years as a band, though, the main thing keeping the music fresh is the bond between members, all four of whom have been in the band since the beginning.

"We get along, love doing music together and have the same spiritual vision – that comes first," Grenehed says. "But we never knew how long we should go on for and didn't want to just keep going if we didn't feel we had something to offer. The good thing I feel as well is that we haven't framed ourselves into any musical genre. Nothing is forbidden when we write music together as long as we can all wrap our hearts around it. That's what makes it interesting still."

The break from touring and writing this album allowed members to spend time with their growing families in Sweden, and Grenehed says they didn't listen to much music for inspiration – other than maybe the Swedish version of children's singer Raffi. But even with the rejuvenation of the time off, the band risked fans forgetting about them entirely.

"The obvious negative effect is that people forget that you exist," he says. "You have to rebuild everything around the band from scratch more or less. We weren't afraid of this, though, and the break was a conscious decision from our end."

Part of their reintroduction to the masses comes in their signing with INO Records, which Grenehed says showed it's willing to take chances in a scared industry. Plans include having two release dates, one for May 6 and one for June 7 that will tentatively come with a two-hour documentary on what the band's been up to the last five years. Tours are in the works for later this year to reintroduce the band to its American fanbase.

But really, four years between albums? Adds Dahlström: "Well, hey, it's better than Guns N' Roses."

Also not one to pass up a chance to call out another band who's long been rumored to be on its way back, Grenehed adds: "Oh, and let's just say that we'd love a rematch against P.O.D. in table tennis anytime."

Blindside's back, fellas. The ball's in your court now.

✖

FAVORITE BAND

SHOWBREAD

FAVO SING

RYAN

2_FOR TODAY
3_UNDEROATH

2_MATTIE MON
3_SPENCER CH

FAVORITE ALBUM

The World is a Thorn
[DEMON HUNTER]

FAVORITE ALBUM COVER

Meridional
[NORMA JEAN]

2_*The Infinite Order* [LIVING SACRIFICE]
3_*The Zombie* EP [THE DEVIL WEARS PRADA]

2_*Attack of the Wolf King* [HASTE THE DAY]
3_*Anthems* [MESSENGERS]

FAVORITE LYRICIST

MATTIE MONTGOMERY

FAVO SO

"Dea
[DISC

2_RYAN CLARK
3_AARON STONE

2_"White as Sno
3_"Collapsing"

FAVORITE GUITARIST

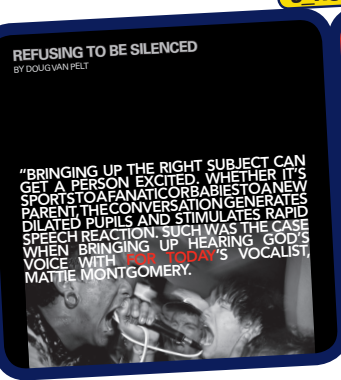
BEN KASICA

FAVOR BASS

JASON WI

2_NICK HIPA
3_ROCKY GRAY

2_LEE MARIE HOST
3_JOHN COOPER


REFUSING TO BE SILENCED
BY DOUG VAN PELT
"BRINGING UP THE RIGHT SUBJECT CAN GET A PERSON EXCITED, WHETHER IT'S SPORTS TO A FANATIC OR BABIES TO A NEW PARENT. THE CONVERSATION GENERATES DILATED PUPILS AND STIMULATES RAPID SPEECH REACTION. SUCH WAS THE CASE WHEN BRINGING UP HEARING GOD'S VOICE WITH FOR TODAY'S VOCALIST, MATTIE MONTGOMERY.

FAVORITE ARTICLE

FOR TODAY

FAV VI

"David
[THE

2_THE TOP 100 CHRISTIAN ROCK ALBUMS OF ALL TIME
3_FLATFOOT 56

2_"In Divisi
3_"Shiver"

RITE
GER
CLARK

FAVORITE
KEYBOARDIST
CHRIS DUDLEY

TGOMERY
AMBERLAIN

2_KOREY COOPER
3_NATHAN CURRIN "NADADDY"

FAVORITE
N E W
B A N D
MESSENGERS

FAVORI
UNSIGN
B A N
GRAVE ROB

2_SENT BY RAVENS
3_AS THEY SLEEP

2_THE WEDDING
3_I AM ALPHA AND O

RITE
N G
r X"
I P L E]

FAVORITE
MERCH
I T E M
Wretched
[GRAVE ROBBER]

ow" [HASTE THE DAY]
[DEMON HUNTER]

2_*Courage* [FLATFOOT 56]
3_*Spade* [FLATFOOT 56]

RITE
IST
SDOM

FAVORITE
DRUMMER
JORDAN MANCINO

ETTER

2_MATT GREINER
3_DANIEL DAVIDSON

ORITE
D E O
De La Hoz"
CHARIOT]

FAVORITE
L I V E
S H O W
THE CHARIOT

on" [UNDEROATH]
[A PLEA FOR PURGING]

2_FLATFOOT 56
3_GRAVE ROBBER

Mosaic designs by: Brian Behm; Lindsay Diane Paramore; Patrick Hart.

(HASTE THE DAY

THE CROWD AT INDIANAPOLIS' FAMOUS EGYPTIAN ROOM CONCERT VENUE ARE ON THEIR FEET. THEY'VE BEEN TREATED TO ENERGETIC AND INTENSE PERFORMANCES BY A PLEA FOR PURGING, THE CHARIOT, MYCHILDREN MYBRIDE AND EVEN A ONE-TIME REUNION OF STILL REMAINS, BUT THEY'RE CHANTING IN UNISON "HASTE – THE – DAY! HASTE – THE – DAY! HASTE – THE – DAY!" EVEN IF SOMEHOW COMPLETELY IGNORANT OF THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS SHOW (THAT

ENDING IT RIGHT

BY DOUG VAN PELT

IT WAS THE FINAL SHOW EVER BY HTD), ANYONE IN THE AUDIENCE WOULD BE ABLE TO SENSE THAT THIS MOMENT WAS VERY SPECIAL. THE EGYPTIAN ROOM IN DOWNTOWN INDIANAPOLIS IS SOLD-OUT THIS NIGHT. 2,000 PEOPLE ARE UNITED IN ONE PURPOSE: TO ROCK OUT ONE FINAL TIME WITH HTD. THE WORD BUZZING THROUGH THE CROWD IS OFTEN ACCENTED WITH DETAILS LIKE, "I CAME ALL THE WAY FROM SOUTH AFRICA TO BE HERE TONIGHT!"

HTD past and present. Front: Scott Whelan; Jason Barnes; Michael Murphy; Jimmy Ryan; Stephen Keech. Back: Giuseppe Capolupo; Devin Chaulk; Brennan Chaulk; Dave Krysl.

"I don't deserve to experience those things I had dreamed of as a kid. I guess God has rewarded me with those things and kind of given me the desires of my heart in some ways; not that I deserve them, but because He's gracious."

Play cornerstone (done)
Play mainstage at cornerstone (done)
Play Warped tour (done)
Play The Egyptian room in indy (done)
Sell out the Egyptian room headlining (done as of 3/11/2011)
Play Verizon Wireless Amphitheater in Noblesville, IN (done)
Be played on X103 (done)
Get the cover of HM (probably never)

Photo: Matthew Leonard (TMiH)

Backstage the anticipation is equal to if not greater than that energy in the room.

"I woke up the morning of that show with a knot in my stomach," admits lone founding member and bassist, Mike Murphy. "So did our manager, Mark (LaFay). He called me and said he had been dry heaving all day. It was just nerve-wracking. It's all I've been since high school, ya know? It was all coming to that point and I wanted it to go perfectly."

"I was literally thinking, 'This could be my very last metal/punk show that I ever do,'" adds frontman/vocalist Stephen Keech. "There was an incredible weight off my shoulders. It was lifted and I knew, 'I need to pour everything that I have into the next hour and 15 minutes of my life. This night may be the only time I get to express myself in this way ever again.' It definitely gave a fire and adrenaline in me."

"Everything I did," continues Murphy, "from changing my clothes to changing my bass strings to unloading the trailer – I thought, 'This is the last time I'm gonna do this. I've done this for so long – for, like, 10 years – and this is the last time!' Everything had a little bit more meaning: 'This is the last soundcheck.' I was changing into my show clothes for the last time. I was walking up the stairs with Jimmy (Ryan, previous vocalist) and I had tears in my eyes. I couldn't help but feel emotional. It was hard. He had tears in his eyes, too. He was just telling me, 'If you need to cry on stage tonight, do it.' I had talked to him earlier that day. I was like, 'Dude, I know I'm gonna cry, cuz I'm a big baby to begin with. I don't want to be a baby on stage. I want to cut myself off from my emotions so that I can perform the best,' which didn't end up happening. I ended up being emotional on stage and not performing at 100%, which is fine.

"Jimmy was like, 'Just let it out if you need to, feel the moment. It's okay.' He was telling me about his last show he did with us in '05, how he was crying.

"And that last prayer before the set was emotional. We were all crying and hugging each other and just hearing the kids chant, 'Haste – The – Day!' one more time before going on stage was ... honestly, it felt like a movie. It was an honor to do and it was really emotional. We were all emotional."

"I think the last show was the most incredible thing the band has ever experienced," shares Keech. "I felt the weight of 10 years on that last show. It was just a beautiful, epic thing. I don't think any of us could have planned or expected for that to happen. The two things that stand out were the very beginning and the very end of the set. We went through our same routine that we always do. We did our prayer and then we did this little chant that we always do to get each other hyped up," he describes as his voice chokes up a little bit, "and it was definitely more energetic than any of the chants we had ever done. We all just started hugging each other and tearing up, because we all knew it was the last time we were going to play together as HTD. It was a very emotional thing. Then walking out and the show was sold out with 2,000 kids. It just looked insane and felt crazy walking out on that huge stage that we never thought we'd be able to headline on. It is a huge place. I saw Slayer there and some other really big bands. We never thought we'd ever play there on that huge stage. Seeing all those kids that we'd met over the years."

"Getting to be with every single member – past and present – and praying all together and just the love between all the members – old and new," elaborates former guitarist Brennan Chaulk. "We all have a relationship with each other, because it has been such a big part of everybody's life. All nine of us (plus Mark being such a part of HTD the whole time) spending time in prayer before the show – having that final one was really cool. That was something that, as it was happening, made you think, 'This is really neat.'"

The show had its unexpected and imperfect moments, like Murphy's strap-lock ripping out of his bass, but it didn't dampen the mood. "I was expecting myself to be mad if something went wrong, but I was laughing," he describes with a chuckle. "I think God was really just trying to show me that nothing was going to be perfect, you gotta go with it – even to the last show."

As if mentally watching a DVD of the performance, he pauses at a couple of scenes to comment: "There's an older song, called 'Blue 42.' Jimmy came out and tag-teamed vocals with Stephen on that. The very end of the set was crazy. We finished our quote-unquote 'last song' and we walked off. The kids wanted an encore and Giuseppe (Capolupo) went up and did a drum solo – which is a sick solo – and I'm watching this solo for the last time and he *kills it!* I loved it. And the very last chorus of 'When Everything Falls,' which is the song we finished with, all the bands (surprised us and) came out. They're all singing with us, jumping around. Dave (Krysl), our guitar player, was standing on top of this piece of plywood that was crowd surfing and Dave was standing on top of it. I was crying. Brennan came up and sang as well. Everyone was on stage. All our families were there. My girlfriend was on the side of the stage."

"The band hit their last note," LaFay describes, "and as the lights came up and the guys took their bows, the fans began chanting, 'Thank you.' It was in that moment that I realized it was over and a sense of accomplishment, sorrow and relief came over me. I hugged each of the guys and as I hugged Mike Murphy, I thanked him for nine years of life together. What a ride it's been."

"I had just dreamed about that last chorus of 'When Everything Falls,'" confesses Murphy, "because it was all going to be over and to kind of end with that lyric – that kind of kept me going – 'I will stand when everything falls away.' To end with that lyric meant a lot to me. After that we all kind of hugged on stage and cried for a little bit.

"I sound like such a baby in this interview," Mike laughs, "but that's okay. 2,000 people chanting 'Thank you' is emotional. It was the perfect way to end."

"It was the most powerful movie ending the band could possibly have," adds Keech. "It was just really epic and great."

When discussing the cover story with the band's manager, LaFay shared Murphy's bucket list for HTD (pictured at left). Both the band and the magazine personnel sound pretty excited to help the band cross that last one off the list.

"HM Magazine has always been in my mind," gushes Murphy, "since before we even started HTD, because Brennan and Devin had a subscription. I remember sleeping over at their place and them having HM Magazine and us looking at it and idolizing it and thinking it was the coolest thing ever. So, to actually be on the cover is a huge honor for us. HM has been a big part of this scene that we've been a part of.

"All that other stuff was just (like) you're a kid going to shows. I saw P.O.D. and Blindside at the Egyptian Room. When we played there last I went and stood about where I was standing and kind of reminisced about it. To play that stage and headline it and sell-out that show, I don't deserve to do that. That's just crazy. Those are the kind of things that feel like destiny. It kinda feels like that was your fate. I don't know how fate or destiny work or operate, but that's the closest I've kind of felt to that.

"It feels good to be respected in your hometown and kind of get that love and it kind of makes me think back to being kids and listening to X-103 on the radio and being part of that and partnered with them in some ways. It's humbling. Cornerstone stuff was always a dream come true. P.O.D. was my favorite band growing up. Sonny was my hero. Sonny is *still* my hero. Seeing P.O.D. on that mainstage and then years later playing that (same) mainstage. Sonny actually watched us play and he told me, 'Good show!' afterwards and that just made my life complete there. Just to be on that same stage and be on the other side of it.

"I don't deserve to experience those things I had dreamed of as a kid. I guess God has

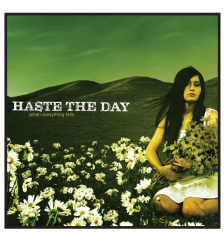
☆ [Go to **hmmag.com** for more bonus material on HTD, including a podcast, concert review and special tour interview.]

rewarded me with those things and kind of given me the desires of my heart in some ways, not that I deserve them, but because He's gracious. I don't know. It's been amazing."

"I want to reiterate how important all the fans have been and the people that have let us know what HTD has done in their lives," adds Chaulk, "because we would go through dry spells where we just didn't know what God was doing. 'Were there seeds being planted?' We knew there had to be, but we just didn't see anything coming from it. And then we had those times where people let us know, like HTD has helped get them through some hard times. I just want to say thank you for that, because that's what kept us going and really kept us motivated that this was something God was using. If it weren't for that, I don't know if we would have kept going through our hard times – without knowing that it was helping others and maybe helping others with their walk with God."

Haste The Day Timeline

"In high school me, Brennan and Devin and our old singer Jimmy and our guitar player, Jason," recalls Murphy, "we got together and wrote our EP. Just a little seven-song EP called ***That They May Know You***. We didn't really expect to go anywhere with it. We wanted to play Cornerstone and start playing shows around our hometown. We kind of all grew up on Solid State. It was our favorite label ever and we would buy any and every release that came out on Solid State or Tooth & Nail. And so, to make a record and to want to show it to Solid State in the hopes of maybe getting signed … but in starting the band that wasn't even a possibility.



"We started playing in our local area and eventually made enough money to make our EP and such. It was so fun making that record. Listening back to your band for the first time is such a cool experience. I probably listened to our EP a thousand times that first month. I loved it. Jimmy actually blew his voice out recording, so we had to come back a couple weeks later. When you're in the studio, you do things differently than you do on stage. You have no adrenaline. There's no vibe. You're just kind of in a room. People are picking apart everything you're doing. You're kind of nervous and you do things differently. When he was screaming he blew his voice out, so we had to go back a couple weeks later.

"Getting signed to Solid State was absolutely a dream for Haste The Day. We idolized Living Sacrifice, Zao, Luti-Kriss – all these bands. Project 86 later. P.O.D. had that *Warriors* EP on Solid State or Tooth & Nail. We released ***Burning Bridges*** in our high school cafeteria. We had graduated, but came back. It was kind of surreal. Every kid wants to rock his cafeteria or play at his school or be like, 'Look at me now' kind of attitude. That was a really fun experience.

"The day after that release we joined up on the *Solid State Tour*. We were opening that tour. It was Norma Jean headlining, Underoath, Beloved and Dead Poetic. And that was an amazing tour. It was right before Underoath broke big. Being out on that tour and having a Solid State release, it was surreal. It was a dream come true for us.

"And we learned a lot from the other bands. One of the first days of that tour, one of the bands, Norma Jean, kinda organized everybody together in a big circle and we just prayed and thanked God for the tour. We were just kids at that point. All those bands toured and put out records – we looked up to 'em. That was a big influence on us, just because of the way they acted on tour and treated the opening band. I remember being on stage and soundchecking and Jake from Norma Jean would just be like, 'You guys need anything? Do you guys want some water or anything?' Being treated like that made a big difference. I still think about that. I thought about that stuff when we were headlining – the way I treated opening bands – and that just had a big influence. Norma Jean was headlining on that tour and we were just the little guys. A couple nights when they would hit backend, Norma Jean would actually give us $100 or so and just be like, 'Get yourselves a hotel on us.' They just said they liked to bless other bands when God provided for them. That was a big influence on us as well. We tried to kind of follow suit with that when we were in a position to help out bands below us on a tour. So that first tour after being signed and putting out *Burning Bridges* was a big one for Haste The Day – kinda shaping the way we acted on tour and the way we behaved as a band. It was an important tour and an important record cycle, where we were just kind of learning.

Then we put out ***When Everything Falls***. I think for most bands you're kind of getting your mistakes out with your first record. You're still trying to find your sound. Then your second and third records are really important. For us our second record was real important. That's where we made the switch – not really consciously – it just kind of happened organically. We were still obviously heavy, but we incorporated a lot more melodics and harmony and focused a lot on choruses and song structure. *Burning Bridges* was kind of all over the place. You repeat a riff maybe once in a song … you get a bunch of riffs and you throw a breakdown in. *When Everything Falls* we got into the 'intro, verse one, chorus, verse two, chorus, bridge, outro' kind of vibe. And we kind of really stuck with that and started to find out who we were as musicians. That record was awesome. I loved making that record. We recorded with Garth ("GGGarth" Richardson) and Benny (Ben Kaplan) up in Vancouver. To work with a producer like Garth – he's done like the Rage stuff – was intimidating, but we stepped up our game with that one. We realized we had to put everything into it or we'd look like fools.

"With *Burning Bridges* I didn't really write anything, but with *When Everything Falls*, Brennan and I got together and did all the melodic stuff and the melodies and choruses. We kind of developed our chemistry as far as singing with Haste the Day. He would do melodies, I would do harmonies and we'd write it all together. That was like a cool part of that record.

"The next record was ***Pressure the Hinges***. That was a big record for us, because we had lost Jimmy, our old singer, and gained Stephen. And Stephen had a big impact on writing. He played guitar and stuff. There's a big difference between *When Everything Falls* and *Pressure the Hinges*. *Pressure the Hinges* got a little bit more mood on it and it just had a different feel to it. Stephen wrote tunes like 'Needles' and 'Minor Prophets' and 'Chorus of Angels.' They were kind of darker and had a little more ambiance

on 'em. We used samples on them. It kind of reshaped Haste The Day's sound. We were still a hardcore band and we were a heavy band and we did singing choruses and all that stuff, but it sounded a little bit different as we were growing into our sound. Stephen's voice is deeper than Jimmy's. And Stephen could also sing, so it added a lead singer, who did not just scream, but also sang. It added a new dynamic to it. It gave it another voice.

"*Pressure the Hinges* was also a little more rock and roll. As Jason our guitar player was kind of finding his place with that style of guitar playing. There were solos and stuff on that record. We did that record with Garth as well. We already had the rapport with him, where we felt more comfortable trying stuff. You're just more comfortable with that whole situation. That record turned out awesome.

"We had lost Jason (Barnes) our guitar player, before we did ***Dreamer***. Jason was a big writer. He had that rock and roll vibe. When we lost Jason, that happier rock and roll solo / '80s influence was out the window and Stephen stepped up even more with his writing. It got even darker, more ambient, more experimental. I'd say even a little heavier. I guess the main adjective to describe *Dreamer* would be dark. Obviously, we still kept with the singing and everything.

"It was just a hard transition for us. But that record … I really like that record. It was our fourth record and things were different. We'd kind of settled into our touring, style and ways and everything.

"We lost Brennan for ***Attack of the Wolf King***, our last record. We didn't have Devin anymore. It was just me and Stephen left. And we had gained Scotty (Whelan, guitarist), Dave (Krysl, guitarist) and Giuseppe (Capolupo, drummer) our new lineup. That's the record I am most proud of. Everything was different. I'd lost Brennan. We'd written melodies together. We were a 50/50 partnership on that. It was like a Lennon/McCartney situation as far as how we depended on each other's ideas to kind of fuel the other's. Devin not being there … he was a consistent drummer and helped with organizing song structures and everything, so everything was different and we all had to step up. We had some different writing influences from Scotty, who's an amazing guitar player. His guitar work on there is phenomenal. I'm so proud of him for that. Then it became me and Stephen doing the melodies and stuff. I was used to singing harmony, whereas Brennan would do melody, but Stephen's range is much higher than mine, so I kind of switched to melody on some stuff and he was the higher voice on it. So, that was kind of a different thing. Stephen and I worked on melodies and stuff on *Pressure the Hinges* and *Dreamer*, but not to the extent on *Attack of the Wolf King*. It was just he and I.

"That record I wanted it so badly to be the best. I wanted it to turn out amazing. I didn't want to just kind of fall off after losing all these other members. It was a weird time in my life and I wanted so badly for the record to turn out well and to glorify God with it. Our biggest song is 'When Everything Falls,' the lyrical stand, 'When everything falls away…' I took that lyric to heart a lot during that record cycle. After losing all the members and stuff. I just wanted to stand here still. I wanna represent who the Lord is. I wanna be strong. I wanna learn from all this, so I kinda took that lyric seriously to heart.

"The lyrics on *Attack of the Wolf King* are really awesome, too. I never wrote lyrics before, but I wrote lyrics on one of the songs – 'Merit For Sadness.' The lyric: 'Open my heart to sadness / it's through the pain that I believe / that love is alive in darkness.' That kind of sums up what I was going through at the time and the Lord still carrying me through that kind of hard time. That record is my favorite and a lot of our fans say that it's their favorite. That makes me smile."

The End

Not many bands get to call the shots on how they bow out, but HTD did. When second-guessed about their method, Murphy and Keech barely flinched. They know they nailed it. "I think Haste The Day was ended right," estimates Murphy. "There were a lot of moments, like when Brennan quit, where I thought we were going to (makes spitting noise with pinched lips) just be done. Ya know? That wouldn't have been right. That's just quitting. We put out what a lot of people think is our best record and I feel like that is a good place to end it. We toured it a full cycle. I feel like that is a good place to end it. And to end it on your own terms – with your own farewell tour? I think (that) is the right place to end it. And we brought Mychildren Mybride, The Chariot and A Plea For Purging – those are some of our best friends – and to end it surrounded by some of your best friends, I think that's the right way to do it. To end it where it all began – in Indianapolis – at a sold-out show? Heck yeah! That's the way I wanted to end it. It felt like the right time."

"It was better than I even thought it would be," concludes Keech. "We always talked about what the last tour would be like. We always joked: 'We're definitely getting a bus for the last tour.' We talked about how it was going to be a huge, epic thing. In all actuality, it was still a big thing. Not quite what we expected. We didn't get a bus like we thought we would, but we ended up with one. Our van broke down and we ended up having to get a bus. We got a good deal on it. I don't know. It was like it was destined to happen."

As to the future, not many of the members know what's around the corner. "It's kind of freeing to not know what's next," confesses Keech. "I plan on doing solo stuff." Don't expect HTD pt. 2. "It's definitely folky and chill stuff. It's stuff that I've kinda been doing since before I was in Haste the Day. It'll be my chance to work on it and make it my main thing." To keep up with what he's doing, follow him on Twitter (twitter.com/stephenkeech). "I'll make sure everyone's kept up to date with what I'm doing," he promises.

The end. (...but see more bonus footage on p.63)

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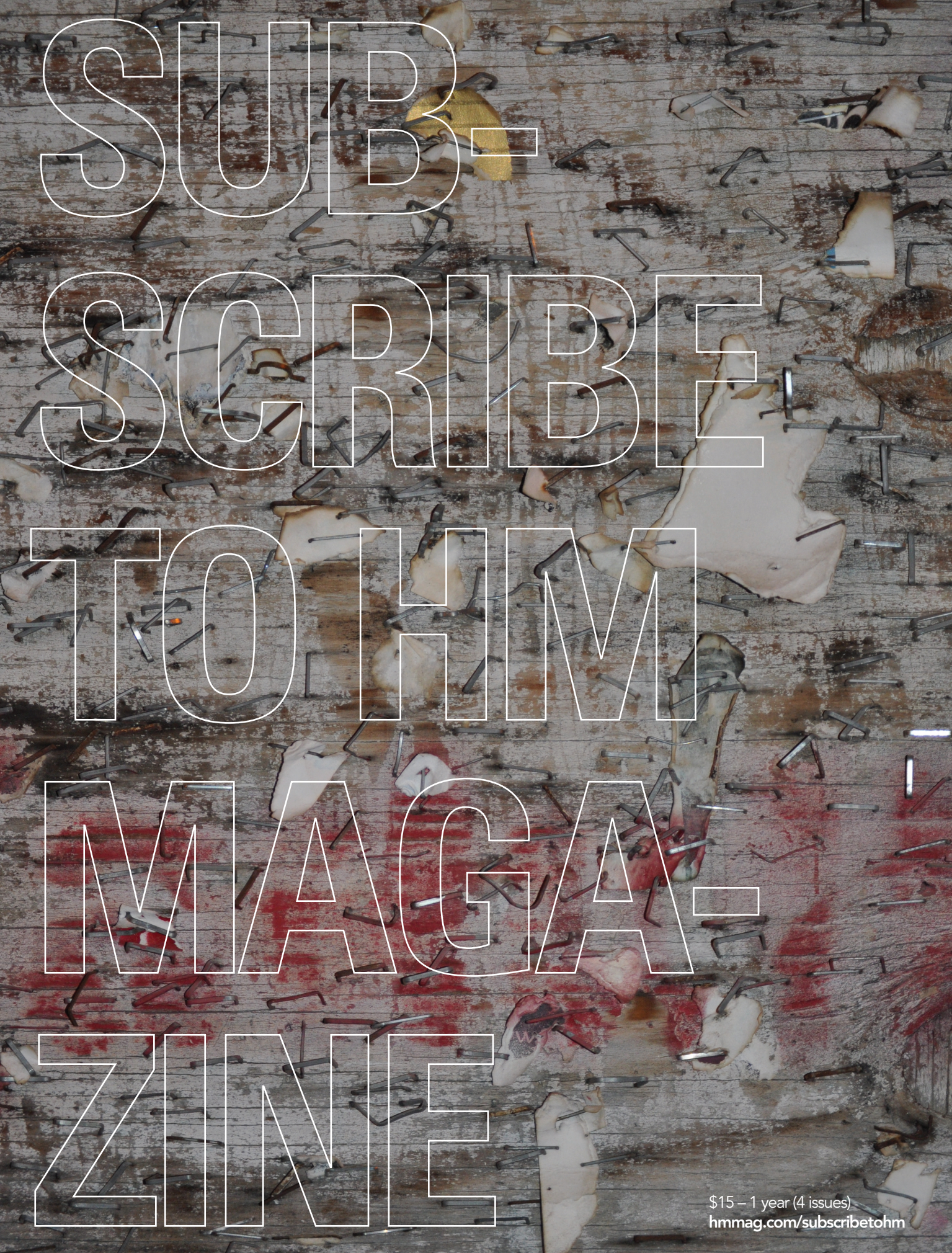
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What **UFO** Says

EVEN THOUGH THE BAND WAS ROYALTY DURING THE NEW WAVE OF BRITISH HEAVY METAL (NWOBHM) THAT SWEPT THE WORLD IN THE EARLY '80S, THIS BAND DIDN'T SEEM TO CAPITALIZE ON ITS KILLER REPUTATION. WHILE JOE ELLIOT OF DEF LEPPARD CALLS THEM "HIS LED ZEPPELIN," THE BAND UFO STILL REMAINS A WELL-KEPT SECRET AMONGST HARD ROCK AND METAL FANS AROUND THE WORLD. THE BAND IS CERTAINLY NOT PINING AWAY AND WHINING ABOUT THE ADVENT OF GRUNGE, HOWEVER. THEY'RE STILL ROCKING STAGES AND STUDIOS ON A REGULAR BASIS. WHEN I WAS FIRST TOLD THAT DRUMMER ANDY PARKER LIVED IN NEARBY GRANGER, TX, I WAS THRILLED TO WHAT WOULD HAVE BEEN A GREAT VISUAL AND PERSONAL PEAK INTO A LEGENDARY ROCK BAND (IT CERTAINLY WOULD HAVE BEEN A "BUCKET LIST" INTERVIEW, AS I ENVISIONED GOLD RECORDS, PHOTOS, MEMORABILIA, ETC). TURNS OUT WE GOT THE NAME OF THE TEXAS TOWN WRONG AND WE HAD TO DO THIS OVER THE PHONE. FOR THE MOST PART, IT WAS A PLEASANT AND TENSION-FREE CONVERSATION. READ ON AND SEE WHERE IT CHANGES.

UFO L-R: Andy Parker, Paul Raymond; Vinnie Moore; Phil Mogg

Looking back over the years, pick out a few moments that could be called some of your proudest moments as a member of UFO…

First album, obviously. The first time you grab your bit of vinyl in your hand that you've made. That was 1970, perhaps. Recording our first Chrysalis album. We had Michael (Schenker) in the band. Doing it (*Phenomenon*) with Leo Lyons from Ten Years After. That was a real big step. First time coming to America. I mean, that's real hard for a British band to actually come here. That was probably '75. We did *Phenomenon* in '74 and then we came here for the first tour in '75. It was a huge tour for us. The first time in Japan. It was the first time I'd ever really gone to the other side of the world. I think that was around '70. The first time we played Day on the Green for Bill Graham in Oakland Coliseum. That was pretty incredible. He was such a great guy. A lot of people said he was awful. He always treated us so well. That was a real shame to lose him like that. He was a good guy. *Strangers...* (*In the Night*, live album), obviously. We did a live album in Japan, but *Strangers...* is probably my favorite UFO album. That was a real milestone, I think. We got to work with George Martin, doing *No Place To Run*. Another huge thing. Who'd have ever thought UFO would get to work with the Beatles producer?

He let you get away with "Alpha Centuri."

Yeah, he was such a cool guy. All of us were going in thinking, 'How the hell is this going to work?' He built that studio almost by hand. He was kind of a ways away and he was having trouble getting people to use it, so he just started saying, 'If you use my studio, I'll produce your album.' That was kind of the offer. I mean, 'Who's going to turn that down?' It had its problems – like being that far and the power. The studio had power generators, but we all had the power go off around 4 o'clock. Coming back and doing *Walk on Water* after being gone for 11 years – that was really cool, too – getting back with the guys, Michael and Phil (Mogg), Pete (Way) and Paul (Raymond). Then when we came back in 2005, because I had not planned it at all. It was not on my schedule of things to do. I was just planning on coming back here to Texas and work on my houses and maybe flip a couple. I got a call out of the blue that Jason (Bonham) was leaving and was I interested… It was funny, because Paul called me and said, 'There's no point in calling,' because he's asked me a bunch of times before, 'but I thought I'd just give it one last shot.' He said, 'Jason's gone and we've got this gig to play in November. Would you be interested?' I think he was really shocked when I said, 'Well actually, yeah, because I'm about to quit my job and move back to America. So yeah, I can do it.' That was great. It really worked out. The band was such a different vibe with Vinnie (Moore). Everyone was just so confident when they walk out there now. They just know they're going to kick (bleep) and everything's going to go well. That's kind of what I was looking for. That kind of uncertainty that was there with Michael – as much as I love Michael and he's just an incredible player, it was just difficult dealing with that and dealing with his instability.

Speaking of, how does it feel for you guys to have to deal with the perception in some fair-weather fans' eyes that you're still under the shadow of the Mad Bomber?

Yeah, I don't know. That's difficult, isn't it? Because there's obviously people out there that are just total Michael freaks and 'UFO will never be UFO without him.' But I think, all I can say to them is, 'You need to come and see the band.' I think a lot of those people just haven't been to see the band with Vinnie… I mean, this band kicks major butt. I still can't believe it – after 40 years – that we can still do that on a nightly basis, but we do. I think people…you can't keep looking at the past, can you? We can't, so why should the fans? If they prefer Michael, great, but at least come out and see for yourself. Don't just assume. It doesn't bother us at all. It doesn't bother Vinnie. It certainly doesn't bother me or Phil or Paul. We're just happy to be out there doing it. I would say 90% of our fans feel the same way, so it's not a problem.

Yeah, you've got quite a track record after him, so…

Absolutely! That's the sad part. I was talking to somebody about this the other day. After Michael left. *Obsession* was the last studio album we did with him. We did *Strangers*… We

turned out some really good… George Martin on *No Place to Run*, *The Wild, The Willing and the Innocent*. *Mechanix*. *Making Contact*. There were some great albums there, but by that time the record company wasn't really pulling weight. It was difficult then. There was a lot of stuff going on. A lot of substance abuse problems. I think we were just kind of burned, man. We'd been doing it to death – just tour and tour and recording. Without the help... Management was really screwed up. Our management really screwed us over. The record company kinda just dropped the ball with us and it's a real shame, because some of those albums didn't get the recognition that they should have got. I thought *Walk on Water* was a great album. I still listen to that album all the time. And the new stuff – especially the last two that I've been on. I love *You Are Here*, the show and live thing. It's just a great band. I think it holds up, ya know. People should stop looking to the past and just kind of look to the future. Come see what the band's like now.

Yeah, for sure. Well, now you've been around the block a few times as a musician. I'm sure you've had some heady and perhaps even glamorous moments as well as the routine, working musicians day-in/day-out grind. What sort of "I hope I never get as old as that guy" moments have you seen yourself become guilty of? You know, at one point you may have made fun of of "lost in the past dreamer" or "out of touch Bozo," but when if ever have you had the misfortune of realizing, "Crap! I'm that guy!?"

(laughs) That's a good one! I had one just recently. It's the only thing I can think of that'll fit in here. We are playing… Let me think where the devil were we? We're in Germany. We actually did the High Voltage Festival in London about a month ago. And to warm up for that show we did three or four club dates in Europe. Well, we were in a club somewhere, in Germany, I believe, and Kate, who does our merchandising and also runs our website and mr-parker-rocks website. She's so great. She does so much for the band. She texted me backstage: 'There's some guy out here. Says he's your mate.' I think his name was Steve Hall or something. 'He used to work with you with Waysted.' I don't know if you know – when I left UFO in '83 and in 1984 I did a short stint with Pete Way's band, Waysted. An album with him.

Yeah.

And did a tour. We actually opened for Iron Maiden in England, but just did the one tour with him. We did a few shows and a rock festival or something. I was in the band for a few months around 1984. So, this is 26 years ago – some ridiculous amount of time. I couldn't even remember the name, let alone the guy's face. 'I'm not sure I know him. Apart from which I have an interview to do after the show, so tell him, you know, if he wants to hang around, I'll see him after I get through with the interview.' So, I did the show. I did the interview. It rolled on for quite a while and then finally Kate came back, because she has to pack up our merch and everything. So, about an hour after we come off stage she comes back and I'm like, 'What happened to that bloke?' She said, 'Oh, he must have left.' Apparently, he came up to the merch desk and he was hanging out, like, bothering her while she was trying to sell, because she's very serious about selling merch. She said, 'He was all sweaty and smelly. I said to him, 'You look like you should buy a t-shirt.' And he said to her, 'Ah, don't worry. I'll bag one off of Andy after I go backstage.' This guy was a complete idiot. When we came out on stage and played he looked up and he went, 'Cool. Hasn't he gotten old?' That was his only comment about me. I was like, '(bleep), man. That was like 26 years ago. I wonder what he looked like? That's about the only thing. So, I guess, yeah, every once in a while somebody does remind you that you're not the guy you used to be. There's a lot of pictures hanging around this house. My wife picks 'em up from time to time when people come by and she shows them and it's like, 'Yes, darling, but that was 30 years ago.' (she laughs in the background) I see a picture of me behind my white plexi-glass drumkit and a gong behind me, which is probably about 1975 or '76 maybe. I was skinny and had long hair. I cannot do that. Maybe back when we were younger and cockier I would do that. We would make fun of people, but I haven't done that. I never do that much. We actually take the piss out of ourselves. This band is notorious for taking the piss out of each other, but not so much other people, because it's only a short step from them to you, isn't it? The fact that we've been doing this – I've obviously been on and off – for 40 years! How possibly can you be the same? I hadn't seen this guy since '84. What the (bleep) does he think I'm going to look like? There's a lot of water under the bridge since then. There you go.

What would be an example or two of a career move that was modeled after another musician or rock star?

Umm … none! I think that's one thing I can say about this band that I've always really – I can't say 'admired,' because I'm kind of part of it – but I always thought it was great that we always stayed true to ourselves. We never really sat down and said, 'Oh, this is what's in now. We need to do an album. We need to come up with something that's trendy or something that's going to go or appeal to this demographic.' Back in the day record companies would try to get you to do that. We never did. And we still don't. What happened and still happens now is we just get together when it's time to make an album and write and throw in ideas. I think on the last album we had some 30-odd song ideas and we just whittled 'em down. Half of 'em made it, half of 'em didn't. There's no kind of pre-conceived idea there. We don't actually go in to make something. Maybe we should (laughs), but something that would end up being commercial. I really like that about the band. We just play what comes from the heart. I just think that's the best way to go, at least with this band.

What do you think of Jesus Christ?

What do I think of him?

Yeah.

The thing is I don't. I was raised Church of England. I spent a lot of time in the church when I was a kid. Was a choir boy. Went to a Church of England school and did my stint with organized religion. Now I have a much broader… I don't believe you have to have organized religion to be a religious person. I just think you should…

(wife interrupts, telling him to bring up something about a pastor. He turns to her, "I'm sorry?! Yeah, I'll tell him that in a minute.")

I feel that if you live your life, you know, right and you treat other people as you want to be treated and try and do the best for others, I think that in its way is a way of being religious. It's funny enough. I actually live next door to a Presbyterian minister. I actually bought my house – the house I'm sitting in right now – I bought from him and he has a beautiful church about one block over. And he's never tried to get me to… I've gotten a bit nervous when I moved next to him, because I figured he might try and get me into his flock as it were. He never has. We've talked about this and he said, 'You know, there's many different ways to worship.' He doesn't try to force his beliefs on me. I don't really think about Jesus. That's the question you asked, 'What do I think about Jesus?' I don't, to be honest with you, think about Jesus Christ very often. Once in a while, but because that's just the way I was raised. You know, when I lost my mother and my father… You know, you kind of turn back to that, but I'm not a practicing Christian. I just try to live my life in a Christian way. Is that good enough?

Yeah.

(his wife laughs in the background)
Does that make sense?

Yeah.

Yeah, good. That's fine.

What do you think about His claims to be "the Way, the Truth the Life, no one comes to the Father but by Me?"

Say that again (pause). What do I think about his quote – 'I am the Way, the…' Well, like I just said to you, I don't think that… I don't… I mean, for a start, it's only hearsay that he said it. I mean, okay, it's in the Bible. I wasn't there, so I've just got to believe that. But I just… I don't think… I think you could take that in a very broad way. I don't know if religion's got a lot to do with music. I thought we were actually going to talk about music and we seem to have gone on to religion, so unless you have other questions about music, we should probably wind this up.

I personally feel that UFO gets slighted and doesn't get the recognition they deserve, but I'm curious who you feel are some NWOBHM bands or just bands in general that you think have never received the recognition they deserve?

Hmmm. Yeah, like I said to you, probably in the '80s we didn't get the recognition… Things dropped off. I don't know. That's a difficult one, isn't it? I mean, there's so many good bands … but who didn't get the recognition they deserved, god?

(wife says, "UFO." He tells her, "He said that.")

There are other ones, but at the top of my head I can't think… I can think of a few that got *more* recognition than they deserved! (laughs) But the ones that didn't? That's difficult, isn't it? I think Gary Moore ... I always think was a very underestimated talent. I love Gary Moore. He's not hugely successful or commercial. That's a difficult question. I should have got these in advance. I could have thought of some answers for you. Off the top of my head I can't think of any. I'm sure there are plenty that didn't really get the attention. There were great bands that probably didn't get it. I'm sorry. Right off the bat I can't think of one. Gary's the only person I can think of. (Note: Moore passed away in February)

That's a good one. What's one of the funniest things you've ever seen from your perch onstage atop your drum stool?

Oh. That was fairly recently, actually. There's a little piece in the set. I think it's at the end of 'Too Hot To Handle,' where Pete Way, who, unfortunately, as you probably know, isn't playing bass

with us right now. He's on hiatus. Hopefully, sorting out his liver condition, but when he was there's a part there at the end of "Too Hot' with Vinnie where they get their guitars behind their heads and they play with their guitars behind their heads during a solo for awhile. It usually goes pretty well, but one night I noticed that Pete was looking a bit strange. I missed the first part, but what happened was he put his guitar behind his head, Vinnie said the strap had got looped around his head and it was over his eyes like a mask. He couldn't see where he was going to start with. He was stumbling around with this strap. He's got the guitar, but he can't take the guitar down, because the strap's looped around his head. So, he's playing, but he couldn't really see where he was going, but at some point the strap actually fell down. It looped around his neck… This might not sound the funniest, but I was weeing myself, because what happened is he usually plays his guitar way down right by his knees, but because he's got this looped around his neck at some point when he put the guitar back down: A) it was kind of strangling him; and B) his guitar was under his chin like Joe Wilson from Joey the Pacemaker. There's nothing he could really do about it until he finished the song. So there he was choking himself with his bass under his chin, trying to look cool. It was the funniest thing I have seen in a long time. I just wish I would have seen the first part, when he was stumbling around with a blindfold. That was the prelude to it and it slipped down further, but because it was wrapped around his neck when he put his guitar back down again it pulled tight. It was pretty funny, I have to say. He comes up with some good stuff. He's just such a wild man. There's always something going on with him.

I really dug the albums Making Contact – love that song "Blinded by a Lie" – and The Wild, The Willing and the Innocent, No Place to Run and Walk on Water. What are some of your favorite moments or songs from those albums?

With *Walk on Water*, that's a good one for me, because, like I said, I'd been out of the band for 11 years and came back to the band for that one. That one is especially close to me. To come back with the guys – with Michael and Pete and Phil and so on and with Ron (Nevison), too, because that was kind of like the magic lineup with the producer that made those great albums in the '70s. Yeah, *Walk on Water* – there's some great songs on there. 'Pushed to the Limit.' I really like that song. In fact, we had it in the set not that long ago. 'Venus' is also another great song. "Long Gone" (from *The Wild, the Willing and the Innocent*)... I really like that song. That was in the set for awhile. Every once in awhile we'll get feedback on the website where people will ask for more songs from the Paul Chapman era. Unfortunately, when you've got 20 studio albums and it's a bear to try to fit into a couple of hours. Something has to go. A lot of the Michael classics we have to play, because everyone expects you to. Then you've got stuff from the Vinnie era and the new stuff. If you've got a new album out, you need to be playing something from your new album. We squeezed a couple of Paul Chapman songs back in and one of them was 'Long Gone,' which I think is a great song. I really do like that one. And 'Lettin' Go' I think we had in there for awhile. To be honest, they didn't get the acclaim they should have and we took them back out again, because I don't know where these people were that had been writing to the website and asking for them, because they certainly weren't in the audience. If songs don't go down that well, they tend to get shunted and something else goes in. 'Blinded By A Lie.' That's a real good song. That's Neil Carter. He's another great musician. Funny enough, when you're talking about someone who didn't get the recognition he deserved. He is back with Gary Moore right now. He played in Wild Horses with Jimmy Bayne and Brian Robertson. He played with Gary for quite a long time and then he went into teaching. He's been teaching clarinet and saxophone for quite some time, but I believe he joined up with Gary again. Yeah, great albums. They didn't really get what they deserve, but there you go.

"What do I think about Jesus?' I don't, to be honest with you, think about Jesus Christ very often."

I passionately believe that Strangers in the Night is probably THE best live album of all time. What are your favorite songs on that album? And feel free to crush my fanboy perceptions and enlighten me to all the post-production in-studio cleanups that might've happened with that album!

There wasn't a lot, I have to say. There were a few technical problems, which you get in a live situation, which needed fixing. But I can honestly say hand-over-heart that every track on that album was played live, so that's good. I just thought the whole album ... and, like I said to you earlier, it's my favorite UFO album. But it's not because we didn't make great studio albums, because we did. I always felt, at least from my point of view, that if you really wanted to see the real UFO, go see them live. Buy the albums, by all means, but I always thought that UFO was a live band. For me to actually get that *Strangers*... double-live album, especially with a lot of it in Chicago… That was such a big town for us. It still is. We're supposed to be heading back there in September to do the Toyota Park for the Loop radio station. That should be fun. I just love that whole album. Obviously, 'Love to Love' is just a really good song. It's such a great … it's still in the set now. There's quite a few of those songs in the set. Like I said, we'd get lynched if we didn't play 'em. We still do. I think 'Love to Love' is one of my favorites.

Yeah, me, too. Favorite places in the world to tour and why?

Well, I'd love to go back to Japan. I've been back in the band five years and we haven't been. I don't know if it's the economy. It probably is. It's very expensive to go there – for the promoter to drag you all the way there and provide equipment. I'd love to go to New Zealand/Australia. I've never been there, either. Vinnie just got back. He was in New Zealand at a guitar festival playing there. He's been down there a couple of times, but we've never been. I have a sister in New Zealand. I have cousins and aunts and things in Australia, so I'd love to go there. We just went to Brazil for the first time recently, which was a real gas. I'm hoping to go back next year. But yeah, I think Australia, New Zealand and back to Japan would be my … and China, I guess! People go there, now. Why not? I don't know if there's any UFO fans in China. I'd like to go see it, myself.

Yeah, me, too.

You've never been? My daughter went. She got a job with Survivor a couple of years ago. She said it was pretty interesting.

What are some of the best character traits of your bandmates – particularly the ones you've played with for years?

Um, man! That's a dangerous one, isn't it? I'd say they're just solid, stand-up guys. Especially Vinnie. That's the one thing I missed with Michael and why I spent a lot of time out of the band – that uncertainty. That kind of instability. With Vinnie it's just great like that – to not have any worries about. Paul Raymond. There's another guy that I think doesn't always get the acclaim he deserves. That guy is such a great all-around musician. He just worked his nuts off on a nightly basis. I don't know if you know this, but he's left-handed and he plays a right-handed guitar. He's playing it upside-down. He's playing keyboards. He's singing background vocals. He's working the stage. And then Phil. I mean, what the hell can you say? The guy's been doing this consistently for 40 years. His voice to me just sounds better than ever. And we all get along. They've always got a sense of humor. That's one of the main things you've gotta have in a band. If you're gonna tour together and spend that much time together, you've got to see the funny side of stuff. You can't take yourself too seriously. I think everyone has that going for them. I can't say enough about the guys. I love being back in this band. I hope it continues for another 40 years.

And what are some characteristics that might surprise and/or amuse people if they knew?

(laughs) You mean like Phil does needlepoint or something like that? He actually collects stamps. I often take him sheets of American stamps, because we have some good ones here. I took him the ones with the tv cowboys – Tom Mix and the Lone Ranger and all that stuff. Paul Raymond is a huge cricket fan. People might not know that. Vinnie? What can I say about Vinnie? He doesn't like mushrooms. Being Italian, that is pretty surprising. Are we good?

What have you thought about some of the musical changes that've taken place over the past few decades? I'm particularly interested to know what you've thought of thrash, speed and death metal as well as today's screamo and hardcore punk/metal hybrids…

It's not my cup of tea, I'm afraid. I like rock. I'll take heavy rock. I like a bit of melody and I like lyrics I can understand. Not my cup of tea. Not in real favor of it.

I appreciate your time, Andy.

Hey, no problem, Doug. If you're ever out this way, come give me a shout.

Thanks, man. I'd love to.

Come by and see what I'm doing. Come drink a beer.

✖

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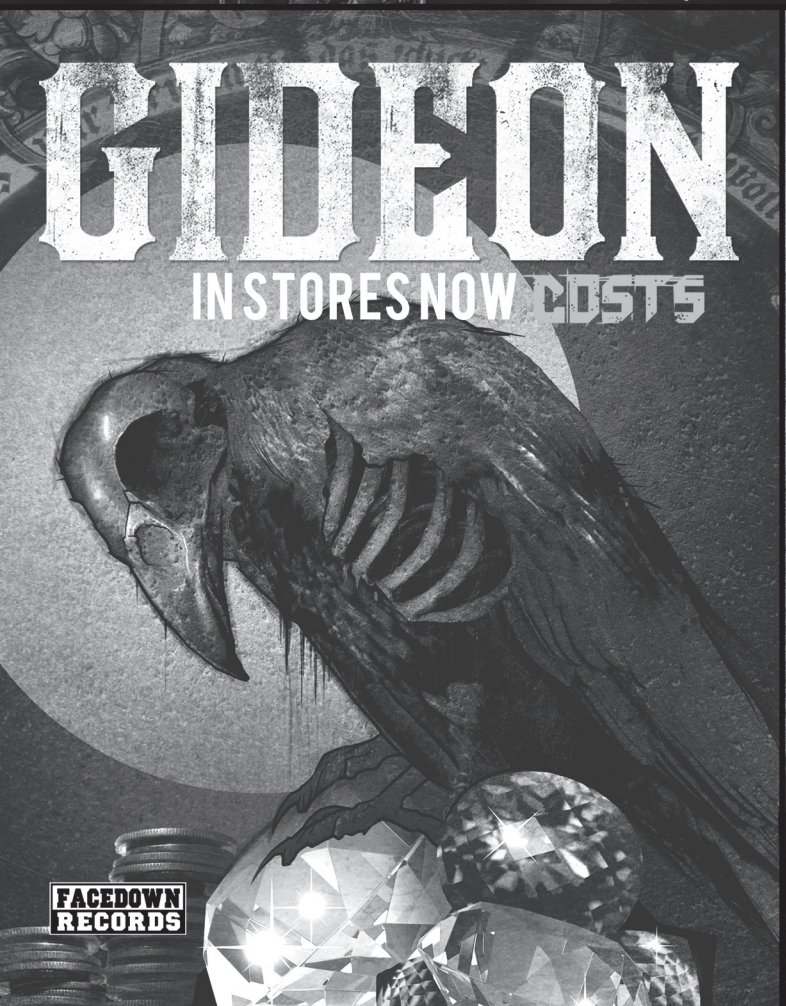

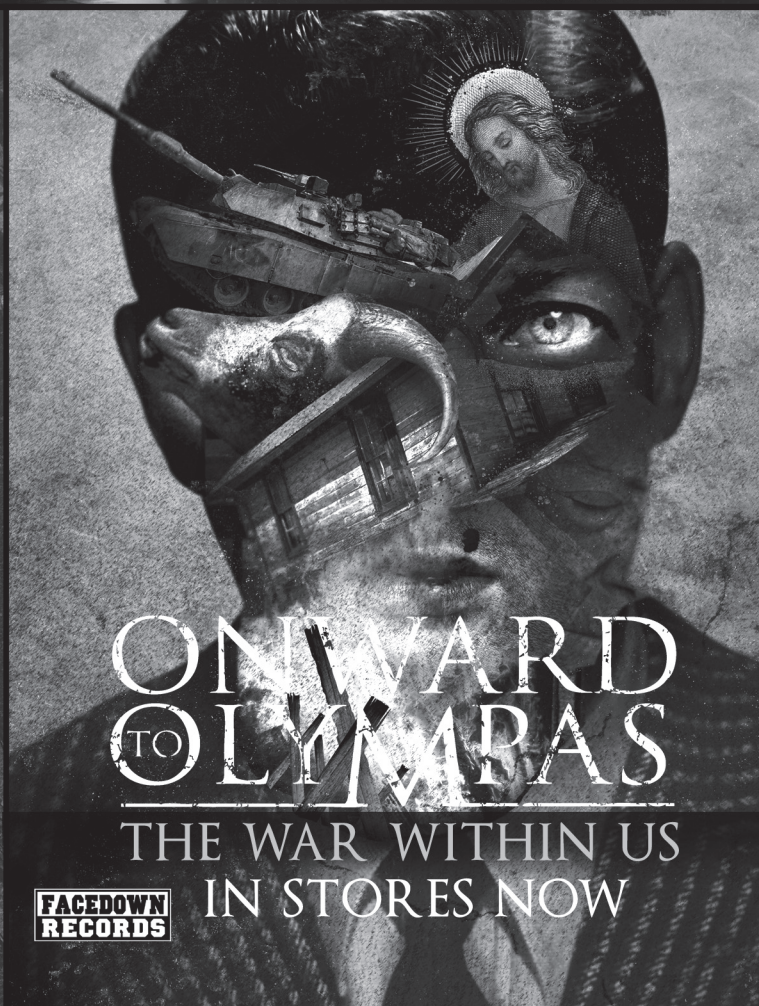

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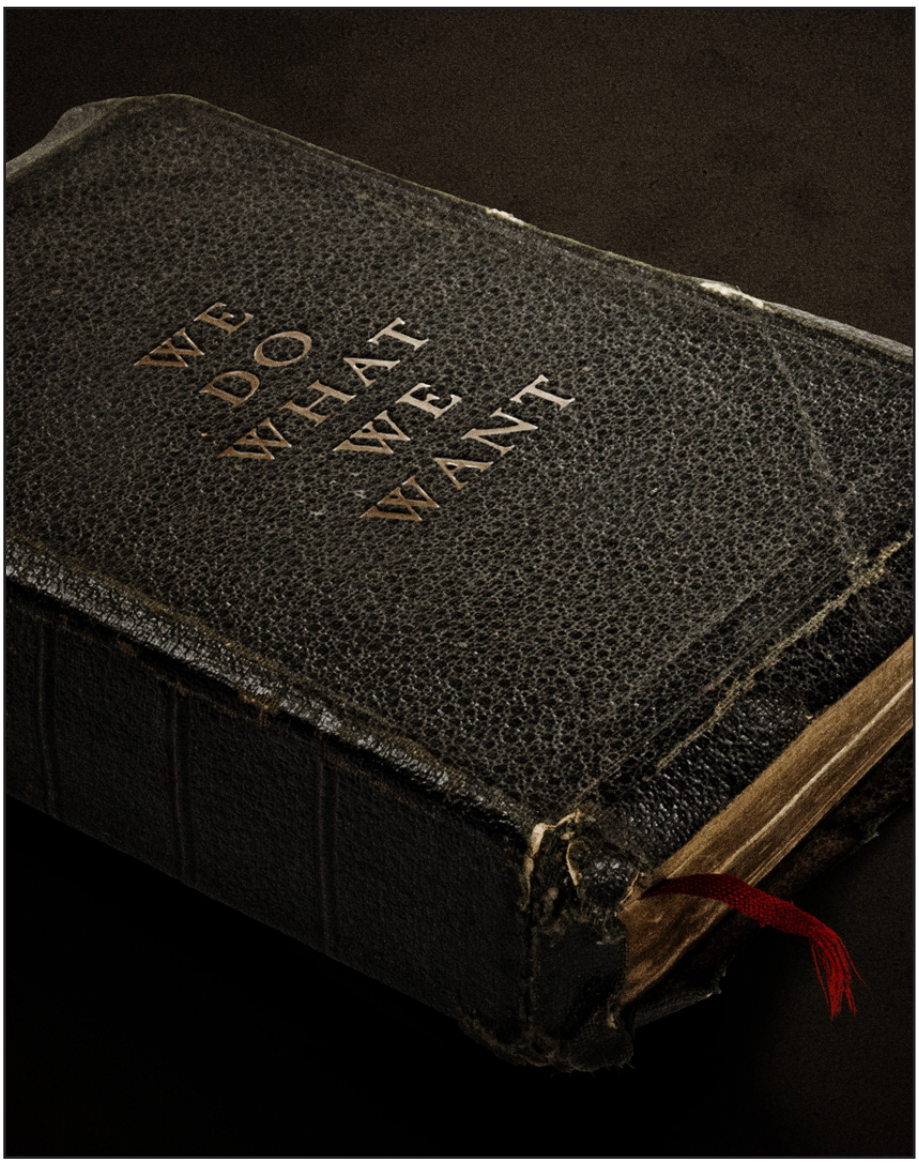

EMERY

WE DO WHAT WE WANT

The plan unveiled for Emery fans is We Do What We Want will exist in two forms: its officially released form and another forthcoming acoustic version. One listen to the quartet's latest reveals a crushing intensity never unleashed on an Emery recording before.

While previous releases certainly utilized such elements, they were never given full control. Thus, *We Do What We Want* is almost an overreaction to the subdued experimentation of 2007's *I'm Only A Man*. The bulk of the album assaults the senses with a never-ending energy that moves from thunderous to punishing, only to finally fall out at the album's final cuts.

For the most part, the relentless energy works well on *We Do What We Want*. The sheer force of "The Cheval Glass" rivals any screamo work in Emery's history. The Foo Fighters flavor on "The Curse of Perfect Days" ramps up with a fantastic swell. "You Wanted It" wins on the lyrical end, capturing well the drama of caving in to your own will only to fall on your face: "The plans you made / You wanted it / The bitter taste / You wanted it / What God became / You wanted it / But the one thing you need you will not get."

Meanwhile, Emery's softer side becomes that much more welcome when it finally emerges on songs like "Fix Me" and "I Never Got to See the West Coast." Both songs are straightforward in their structure and melody, yet they're rather striking against such an intense backdrop. "Fix Me" becomes the better of the two tracks with its simplistic, heartfelt prayer and memorable melody.

Not everything works on *We Do What We Want*, and that keeps this from being any sort of masterpiece. For example, "Scissors" is a bit angular and jumpy and keeps the listener from fully settling in. The sequencing also helps accomplish the overly heavy feel, which is what the band was going for, but it also makes for a lopsided listen in a digital age. Given the aims, however, Emery has succeeded in spades in creating their best lyrical work and heaviest tracks yet. ~~[SOLID STATE] MATT CONNER~~

Rating system

05 *CLASSIC*
04 *FABULOUS*
03 *SOLID*
02 *SUSPECT*
01 *AMISS*
***** *1/2*

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STRYPER
THE COVERING

Stryper sold a lot of music based on the strength of ballads like "Honestly," perhaps so much so that it's easy to forget how hard the band can rock. Oz Fox and company fight back with guitars and silence their naysayers with this fun disc covering many of the late '70s and early '80s metal acts that Stryper listened to growing up, a who's who list of metal including Priest, Maiden, Kiss, Purple, Led Zep, VH, UFO, Ozzy and the Scorpions. Many in the biz have responded with open mouthed amazement at the skill and ingenuity with which Stryper have put their own stamp on these guitar classics, this reviewer included. The yellow and black covering Kiss, the Scorpions, and Ozzy stylistically isn't such a stretch, but the performance on mandatory headbangers like "Highway Star," "Breaking the Law," and "The Trooper" is jaw dropping. Includes one new Stryper original "God," lest you should think that Stryper has forsaken "The Way." Lots of tasty morsels here, but the crown jewel of them all is Michael Sweet playing homage to the late great Ronnie James Dio during his Black Sabbath era for the dark classic masterpiece "Heaven and Hell." The comic book angel cover art is goofy, but you won't mind when your windows are rolled down, playing this cover album loud and often. Well done, guys! ~~[BIG 3] CHRIS GATTO~~

THE VIOLET BURNING
THE STORY OF OUR LIVES:
LIEBE UBER ALLES, BLACK AS DEATH,
AND THE FANTASTIC MACHINE

Rock bands have a bad tendency to get old and lazy, even the good ones. If you don't believe this, just scan the oldies touring circuit for ready examples. Thank goodness, there are exceptions to this rule, and The Violet Burning is one such beautifully exceptional instance. Mike Pritzl has continued to lead his band to green pastures of creativity, long after the group was a buzz band in the early '90s. This latest release, *The Story of Our Lives*, is broken down into three (full-length album) parts and is an extensive, autobiographical work. On one track called "Br0ther (The Lights Have Gone)," Pritzl seems to be commenting on his oftentimes rocky relationship with the Christian music business. "I'm still looking for Jesus inside this machine," he confesses. There are moments where this music gets a little harder than typical Violet Burning material (e.g. "Firstborn from the Dead"); perhaps to highlight the influence bands like Black Sabbath have had on Pritzl's growth as an artist. Although Smashing Pumpkins' guitarist Jeff Schroeder helped on this project, it is Pritzl's unique talent that gives the music its true glow. Whether the music clicks along ominously, as it does during "Cardiac," or becomes orchestral the way it does on "Arc," Pritzl's honest, yearning voice stands out most of all. What makes Pritzl one of rock's best vocalists is that there is never a wasted note. He may not sound pretty like Bono – who rarely wastes notes either, by the way – but he is always fully engaged. He's not just singing for his supper; he's singing for his very life. A long strange trip, both in and out of the fickle Christian music scene, seems to be the overriding story of Violet Burning's life. ~~[HONEYBLUSHING] DAN MACINTOSH~~

ABANDON KANSAS
AD ASTRA PER ASPERA

Abandon Kansas, due to the name, reminds me of the movie, *The Wizard of Oz*. That being said, because of word association, Abandon Kansas should also bring to mind the band, Toto. Fortunately, Abandon Kansas has nothing to do with *The Wizard of Oz* and sounds nothing like Toto. This is good news for fans of modern rock. Can one imagine the band that played "Rosanna" and "Africa" putting out a disc full of 2011-styled rock and roll? If anything, the lead guitar work, vocals and overall anthemic, emotional feel of the 10 songs on Abandon Kansas' *Ad Astra Per Aspera* are more akin to the work of Snow Patrol, with more hooks stirred into the mix. Producer Mark Lee Townsend definitely had rock radio firmly in mind when helping the band craft the record. There are plenty of power chords, but they are lower in the mix, with nice melodic lead lines taking the reins. The drums sound huge, without being overpowering and the bass has a nice midrange feel, allowing some of the gentle growl of the strings to shine through. The vocals ride the mix like a well-watered horse, keeping the pace, adding intensity but never overdoing it. "Heaven Come My Way" shines the brightest. Its chorus part, verses and bridge all pay testimony to what Abandon Kansas does best—sincere modern rock with just the right amount of bombast and intensity. ~~[GOTEE] CHRIS CALLAWAY~~

THE END OF THE OCEAN
PACIFIC•ATLANTIC

There are days in the week where I want to be taken on a journey through music. Columbus, OH's The End of The Ocean is one of those bands that have taken me on an amazing musical journey that I cannot describe in words. This five-piece avant garde instrumental band is one of the best I have heard this year. Their first release *Pacific•Atlantic* is as vast and wide as the space between these two oceans. This is one of those albums you hear in soundtracks to movie trailers when the guy is running to stop the girl from leaving. Or when a baby is being born. This record is the soundtrack of life's journey. If you are a fan of bands like Shapes Stars Make or This Will Destroy You, you will love this record.
~~[FUTURE RECORDINGS] ROB SHAMELESS~~

CORAM DEO
DEATH IS DEAD

On Ukraine's Coram Deo's second release (and first for Soundmass), the band ditch their blackened gothic metal tendencies – save for a few traces in the vox at times – opting instead for a style of thrash that melds old and new schools of that genre into an interesting collage. Does it work? In most cases, yes, and most notably when they slow things down to a chunky riff on "Judas." The riff is eerily similar to the early Tourniquet track "Holy Danger," but in a way that recalls everything good about the oxymoronic 'slow thrash.' ~~[SOUNDMASS] LOYD HARP~~

I, THE BREATHER
THESE ARE MY SINS

This Baltimore-based band shakes the ground with their Sumerian debut album, bringing a heavy mix of explosive bass drops and unforgiving riffs. It's like August Burns Red fused with Inhale/Exhale to make one awesome sound. The band packs on heavy, Spirit-filled lyrics in a way that can't be ignored. In "The Common Good," vocalist Shawn Spann cries out, "Oh and how they spit in your face and claimed to be the holy ones! We claimed to be the holy ones." They're not your typical Christian band, but a group that truly speaks from their hearts and experiences that got them where they are today. The concept of this album is solid and true, and the sound itself is heavy and fairly technical. *These Are My Sins* has many breakdowns, each of which is hard and great for the pit. The downfall to this album is that some songs sound too much alike and make the album hard to follow at points. It's a great debut album and I believe that I, The Breather is going to bring something new to the table in 2011. ~~[SUMERIAN] NICK COTRUFO (THIS MOMENT IN HARDCORE)~~

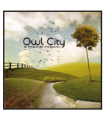
Ratings

	DV	Writer
Emery *We Do What We Want*	04	04
Stryper *The Covering*	04	04
The Violet Burning *The Story of Our Lives...*	04*	04
Abandon Kansas *Ad Astra Per Aspera*	03*	03
The End of the Ocean *Pacific•Atlantic*	04	04*
Coram Deo *Death Is Dead*	03	03
I, The Breather *These Are My Sins*	04	04
Craig's Brother *The Insidious Lie*	03*	04*
Owl City *All Things Bright and Beautiful*	03*	
Gideon *Costs*	03*	03
Smoking Popes *This Is Only A Test*	04	03*
Ace Augustine *The Absolute*	04	05
The Color Morale *My Devil In Your Eyes*	04	03*
Abandon *Control*	03*	03
Bruce Cockburn *Small Source Of Comfort*	04	03*
Ironwill *Unturned*	03	03*

CRAIG'S BROTHER

THE INSIDIOUS LIE

After ten years Craig's Brother comes out with a brand new full-length record. This time they do it all DIY. No label backing whatsoever. Seems like the older bands are making some great comebacks this year. Craig's Brother is no exception. This record sounds like classic CB. Like a bottle of fine wine, they just get better with age. Lyrically Ted talks about a lot of different things: like not letting your job get the best of you; being out on the road with bandmates that know how to get under your skin (yet) all along standing by them in the tough times. There are so many great songs on here. I could go on forever. Just know that at the end of this record it's all about Christ crucified. ~~[CHAOS] ROB SHAMELESS~~



OWL CITY

ALL THINGS BRIGHT AND BEAUTIFUL

No one expected little Adam Young's songs to get much further than his parents' Minnesota basement – much less practically take over the world in 2009. It's hard to sneak up on someone when your album has gone platinum, though. Even with a pre-*Ocean Eyes* demo release under the moniker Sky Sailing as a tide-us-over, album number two still comes with high expectation and no uncertain amount of pressure. Having had the privilege (haters would call it a curse) of seeing Owl City's live performance progression from two guys (on Apple notebooks and two keyboards) to a full band (and then) to an even fuller band to all of the above with a light show to boot, I was kind of nervous about listening to *All Things Bright and Beautiful*. My nervousness was founded on the premise that his live show got less cute, less intimate and less unique. I feared the same for his sophomore release. Ten seconds into the lead-off track, "The Real World," these fears were subsided. Quirky pop, clever lyrics and soft vocals danced out of my computer's speakers and it was clear. Young is no dummy. He hasn't tinkered too much with his formula for success. These dozen songs should be fine companions for the near future. All is right with Owl City's world and I doubt I'm the only one that will rejoice over this. ~~[UNIVERSAL REPUBLIC] DOUG VAN PELT~~

GIDEON

COSTS

Gideon is Alabama's newest heavy hitters. They have quickly made a name for themselves with heavy touring and killer shows. *Cost* is one of those records every nu hardcore kid is going to jock. It has the thick drop-chord sounding guitar with a splash of studio effects. There are some sweet parts on this record that are very catchy and get stuck in your head. I am sure that every 16-23-year-old hardcore kid is going to love this record. For an old guy like me, it's ok. I know Gideon will be a great band to pick up the slack with the bands that have left Facedown. If you where wondering when they were going to find a band like The Ghost Inside, Gideon is your band. ~~[FACEDOWN] ROB SHAMELESS~~

SMOKING POPES

THIS IS ONLY A TEST

With *This Is Only a Test*, Josh Caterer wrote songs from a teenager's perspective. He was born to play this part, because he has always seemed to be stuck in stunted adolescence, which gets a little creepy as he gets older. However, this context brings out all that's wonderful about Smoking Popes music. Typical school stuff is covered, from contemplating college with "College," to being too sick for P.E. on "Excuse Me, Coach." There's even the uncomfortable admission of "I've Got Mono." Smoking Popes rock out like the blessed power-poppers they truly are, yet show great restraint on the piano-colored ballad, "College." The song "How Dangerous," though not expressly Christian, could pass for a Christian manifesto. "In our hearts do we believe that the truth will set us free?" Caterer asks, with the boldness of the Apostle Paul. It's a good question for high school students, or anyone, for that matter. ~~[ASIAN MAN] DAN MACINTOSH~~

ACE AUGUSTINE

THE ABSOLUTE

Has Pennsylvania become the new birthplace for amazing hardcore? Metalcore enthusiasts are already familiar with the works of Pennsylvania natives August Burns Red and Once Nothing. Now, after listening to Ace Augustine's new album, *The Absolute*, it's safe to say PA could be the place where new talented hardcore bands are born! Their style is like a blend between old melodic Dead Poetic and the heavy brutality of August Burns Red. Each song is unique in its sound with phenomenal technical guitar work, raspy mid-high range vocals, harmonized singing, and drumming that's so fast you gotta wonder if it's a drum machine! It's obvious these guys are seasoned musicians, not just fans of the scene who hope to make a good band. These guys know how to make both an old-school hardcore scene veteran and the new scene kid enjoy every song on their album. They know how to preserve the "garage band" sound, yet still maintain a professional recording. Their lyrics are sure to get your heart on fire for the Lord! Just check out the song "Jonas Spoke of Innocence," where he quotes Philippians 4:13 "For I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me." Ace Augustine is a band you need to keep your eyes on. They will go somewhere. ~~[STRIKE FIRST] MATTHEW LEONARD (TMIH)~~

THE COLOR MORALE

MY DEVIL IN YOUR EYES

Never judge a book by its cover, and never judge a band by its name. So instead of providing the score for a confident rainbow, The Color Morale strikes with a thunderstorm. Using the hardcore versus relief chorus formula, the band delivers an intense blend of pummeling breakdowns, soaring guitar leads, and alternating vocals that faithfully follow the tone. But if only they visited the melodically lush intro on "Falling Awake" more often, would they have a balanced and a toned dynamic (but give them some time to discover this, it's only their debut album). ~~[RISE] DAN FRAZIER~~

ABANDON

CONTROL

There's a creative spark present on *Control*, the latest LP from Abandon, that wasn't present on the band's debut *Searchlights*. The ramped-up energy of "SOS" and the jangly guitars and dance hall synths on "Feel It In Your Heart" present a new side of the Forefront five-piece and take them further from their worship roots. Unfortunately, it's also taking away from the band's strengths. Abandon's first musical fruits revealed an impeccable sense of melodic timing and structure, but it's harder to find here. The rising chorus of "Live It Out" and repetitive scheme of "Your Love Goes On" displays these keen sensibilities, but it's frustrating to hear forgetful tunes on a disc from Abandon. The highlights are still present, but there's a youthful zeal that actually gets in the way of what should be going on. ~~[FOREFRONT] MATT CONNER~~

BRUCE COCKBURN

SMALL SOURCE OF COMFORT

The title to Bruce Cockburn's latest release comes from a track called "Five Fifty-One," where the talented Canadian singer/songwriter notes, "Small source of comfort, dawn was breaking in the air." In our recession weary world, we take comfort wherever we can find it. Cockburn still sees beauty in the world, however, even though he has to look harder to find it. He finds lovely visions in the fairer sex, which he expresses through the song "Radiance." However, the song is about more than just women's beauty; it's all the light in life, in fact. "Radiance is a woman / all women / all life." *Small Source of Comfort* includes many of the comforting and familiar Cockburn elements we've come to appreciate over the years, including the humor in "Call Me Rose," which imagines Richard Nixon as a woman, and guitar brilliance, best exemplified by "Bohemian 3-Step." Women in the world, indeed, are radiant. They all are, except for a reincarnated Richard Nixon, of course. ~~[TRUE NORTH] DAN MACINTOSH~~

IRONWILL

UNTURNED

Ironwill is the newest band to the Blood & Ink roster. They are also the second melodic hardcore band the label has ever had. Ironwill is a fury of five that is keeping Augusta, GA, on the map. They are not reinventing the sound, though they do it very well. I am impressed with these guys. Though I am more of a fan of this style of hardcore over the nu hardcore that has been coming out. This record seems to bleed passion. With songs about life's ups and downs and the struggles of being a man, this record has something we all can relate to. *Unturned* is going to be one of your favorite records. If you are fans of Life In Your Way, Hundredth, or even wondered when Blood and Ink was going to find their next Saints Never Surrender, Ironwill is that band. ~~[BLOOD & INK] ROB SHAMELESS~~

DEREK WEBB

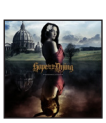
FEEDBACK

The Lord's Prayer has inspired many a musician to put these great words of Jesus into song. However, few have made their tribute sound quite like Derek Webb's *Feedback*. Except for a few places, such as on "Amen," this is an all-instrumental project. Calling it *Feedback* is also a bit of a misnomer, as that title conjures up images of noisy guitars. Webb's music is not guitar-y at all, as it's primarily comprised of keyboard textures, and it's not noisy, but mostly soft and sweet. In fact, some of the sounds on this project lean dangerously close to middle of the road music. "Your Kingdom Come" is the best track of all, as it chimes with a distinctly celebratory tone. "Hallowed Is Your Name" is appropriately subdued, and brings to mind the reverent music Terry Taylor was making – with a big keyboard assist from Rob Watson – on the *A Briefing for the Ascent* album. The wonderful thing about spiritually-influenced instrumental music is that it is wide open to personal interpretation, similar to scripture itself. *Feedback* is a bold step forward in Webb's already fast-forwarding artistic growth. Don't take your eyes off him – even for a minute. ~~[INO] DAN MACINTOSH~~

BLESSID UNION OF SOULS

THE MISSION FIELD

Much of Blessid Union of Souls' new CD is filled with sincere, heartfelt songs. For instance, the album's title track is a slow, gospel Great Commission ballad. Although vocalist Eliot Sloan's heart is in the right place, *The Mission Field* shines brightest on the song "Higher Calling," which is far more upbeat. The drum track clicks along, like a commuter train racing along the rails, while the electric guitars shimmer like a classic tune by The Cars. Additionally, Sloan's voice easily vacillates between a low, authoritative tone and a whining falsetto. When Sloan sings, "Plant the seeds of love into our hearts and watch them grow," it is a beautiful moment of time-lapsed musicality. "The Only Song" provides similar jolts of joy. It's a worship song that somehow doesn't really sound like a typical praise tune. These two songs find Blessid Union of Souls squarely in the mission field where it belongs. ~~[SALVATION ROAD] DAN MACINTOSH~~



HOPE FOR THE DYING

DISSIMULATION

What happened to Hope For The Dying? I'll tell you: they found their sound. This new record is nothing like I thought it would be. I was blown away. It is clean. It is heavy. It also is some really good metal. These guys really matured with their first Facedown release and it is about time they sit at the big boy's table. These guys are showing their big brothers they can do it just as good or better then they can. This is the first band I have ever heard on Facedown to do the mellow almost jazzy amazement that only Between The Buried and Me have coined as their own. Josh Ditto learned how to play that keyboard to where they sound almost like a black metal band at some points. *Dissimulation* is definitely my favorite record Facedown has put out this spring. ~~[FACEDOWN] ROB SHAMELESS~~

ONWARD TO OLYMPAS

THE WAR WITHIN US

It feels like the guys in Onward to Olympas are trying to find themselves on this sophomore album. In an effort to separate from the pack over at Facedown Records, they've done a little bit of everything on *The War Within Us*. The album walks a thin line from metalcore to oldschool hardcore, while mixing in some clean vocals and even a softer praise song. And while all of it works on its own, it can feel a bit disjointed at times. "Hidden Eyes" and "Unsuitable Patterns" are standout tracks on the album, and are a good sign of real promise from this North Carolina quintet. ~~[FACEDOWN] TIM HARRIS~~

BECOMING THE ARCHETYPE

CELESTIAL COMPLETION

BTA may not look and act like your typical metal band, but the sounds that emanate from the speakers are extreme nonetheless. Their fourth – and most diverse – release in a decade is a balanced blend of death, progressive and metalcore styles, with some heavy experimentation thrown in for fun. The outrageous ska-skewed tune "Cardiac Rebellion" is quite a shocker, but the 3-part requiem that precedes it hearkens back to the kind of composition we first heard on *Terminate Damnation* where the beauty is effectively juxtaposed with the brutal. Songs like "The Magnetic Sky," "Internal Illumination" and "Reflect/Refract" are huge. The mixture of guitar tones and vocal styles throughout is reminiscent of progressive extremists Tourniquet (especially on "Path of the Beam") yet BTA retains their distinct and unique flavor. While *Celestial Completion* doesn't have the immediate appeal of *Dichotomy*, BTA have again proven they are one of the most talented and innovative bands in our scene. ~~[SOLID STATE] JONATHAN SWANK~~

BLINDSIDE

WITH SHIVERING HEARTS WE WAIT

After a four year break from the scene, Blindside have made what may be the best album of their career, giving us *With Shivering Hearts We Wait*. This new release, produced by Howard Benson, possesses much of the same elements of the band's catalog (which dates back to 1994), with a poignancy previously unsung by vocalist Christian Lindskog. The tongue-in-cheek '80s hip-hoppy rocker, "Monster on the Radio," is hit single personified, wielding hooks as catchy as flypaper. "Bloodstained Hollywood Ending" is another radio-friendly track with the mainstream appeal characteristic of Blindside. The Stockholm Swedes' heavy side is on here, too. Drummer Marcus Dahlstrom pulls out all the stops in "Withering," a song about the struggles and dry spots as we trudge the Christian walk. "There Must Be Something in the Water" is the hard-hitting opener, while the ender, "There Must Be Something in the Wind," with its depth, weight and otherworldly instrumentals, is the song that will surely turn fans and new listeners on their ear. Well worth the wait. ~~[INO] CHARLIE STEFFENS~~

TEXAS IN JULY

ONE REALITY

Ephrata, Pennsylvania's metalcore quintet, Texas in July, has loudly brought forth its second full-length album, *One Reality*. Evidently, for this follow-up to their 2009 effort, *I Am*, the band put emphasis on better songwriting and sound, and hired producer Zeuss (Hatebreed, Shadows Fall) and stepped up the guitars and drums a bit. The hard-hitting opener, "Magnolia," displays characteristic heaviness, flaunting drummer Adam Gray's power and dexterity. With moving lyrics and thrashy, guitar-driven power, "No Greater Love" emotes Christ's truth with a refreshingly intelligible, sermonic voice intermittently weaved between Alex Good's rasping vocals. "May," the only instrumental on the album, is a slow, moody, acoustic guitar interlude, placed rightly in the tracklist. While it's loudly apparent that TIJ can crush it with the brutality of seasoned metal vets, too often through this new offering does the material resemble that of their contemporaries. But on the plus side, there isn't a certified dud or boring opus on the record. Consider theirs to be a work in progress. ~~[EQUAL VISION] CHARLIE STEFFENS~~

Ratings

	DV	Writer
Derek Webb *Feedback*	03	04
Blessid Union of Souls *The Mission Field*	03	02*
Hope For The Dying *Dissimulation*	04	04*
Onward To Olympas *The War Within Us*	04	03
Becoming The Archetype *Celestial Completion*	04	04
Blindside *Celestial Completion*	04	04
Texas In July *One Reality*	04	02

THE MB AGENCY

Purchase the Japan Benefit CD featuring the bands below
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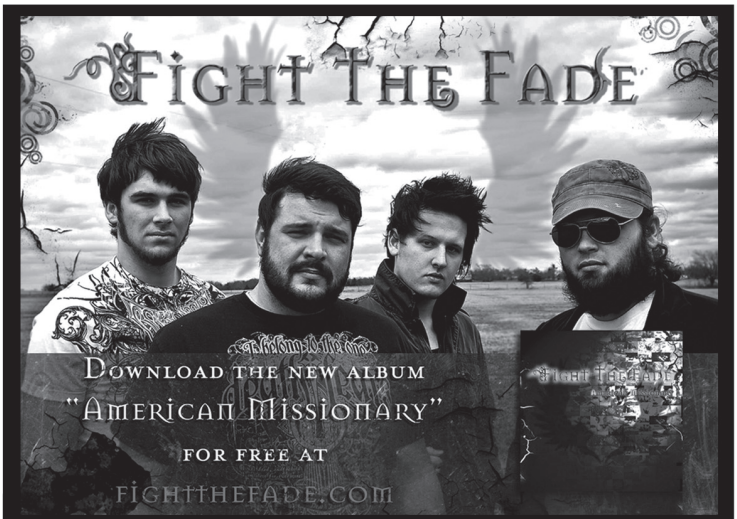
100% Of Sales Go To Japan Relief



Fight The Fade is a Christian rock band reaching people for Christ using rock and roll and a powerful testimony by lead singer Jason McPhail. They saw 170 first time salvations and hundreds more prayed with since 2009. They are ready to see a reformation in the way the people of God think. A very unique quality of the band is that they give away bibles and their music at every show for free! The band has given away 6,000 hard copies of their music. Fight The Fade is doing a co-headline tour with Children 18:3 at the end of May spanning from Mena, Arkansas to Des Moines, Iowa. Fight The Fade will also play the Texas stage at Cornerstone Festival and is in the main support for Rock The River "We want to see a revolution in the Christian music industry, where the message becomes more important than the album sales."

With Shaking Hands is an electronic/hardcore/doomstep band out of Fort Worth, Texas. Starting less than a year ago, the band has played with Emmure, The Devil Wears Prada, Enter Shikari, and Forever The Sickest Kids. The band has been featured in AP Magazine and on Hollywood Billboards. With regional touring, major festivals, and sold out shows under their belts, the band is set to release their first self-produced EP titled White Noise in the spring of 2011.

facebook.com/withshakinghands

facebook.com/eatenbyadreamdesigns

Archimedes, Watch Out!
facebook.com/watchoutmusic

As He Wept
facebook.com/ashewept

Wake The Lions
facebook.com/rawrwtl

Fite
bandcalledfite.com

Life Not Our Own
facebook.com/lifenotourown

Found In The Fall
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Alters To Ashes
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My Decision

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The Christian & Art

WITH KEMPER CRABB

The Disconnect: Why Evangelicals Make Bad Art (Part the Twenty-Seventh)

We've been exploring in this series answers as to why millions of Evangelical Americans have produced so few examples of quality art in any artistic category, seeing that this is largely due to limited (and/or distorted) views of Biblical teaching (or a failure to act on the implications of its teachings), despite the fact that Holy Writ instructs Christians in "every good work" (2 Tim. 3: 16-17), which works of necessity include the making of art.

We looked at the negative effects of such theologically deficient perspectives on the doctrines of Creation and Eschatology, which result in denigrations of the physical world and time as appropriate theaters of God's Purposes, encouraging pessimism concerning history, and viewing the world as Satan's realm which needs only to be escaped from, rather than redeemed and fulfilled.

We saw also that sub-Biblical views on the doctrine of the Holy Trinity led to a destruction of Scriptural justification of symbol as simultaneously showing forth both multiple meanings and unified meaning. Such views lead as well to the reduction of men from the mysterious bearers of God's Image to simplistic machines amenable to quick-fix formulae.

We then turned to look at the implications of the Incarnation of Christ, in which God, in the Second Person of the Trinity, joined Himself to a fully Human Nature and Body so that He could be the Perfect Sacrifice to atone for the sins of mankind by dying in fallen humanity's place. This Eternal Joining of God to Man in Christ Jesus is summed up by the Council of Chalcedon (A.D. 451) when it wrote that He is "at once complete in Godhead and complete in manhood. Truly God and truly Man…"

We've seen how this aberrant view of the Incarnation can lead to devaluation of the fact of Christ's Growth and Human Development, which in turn discounts the valuation of regular human growth in time as unimportant to God's Purposes, so that men are seen in a deformed fashion.

The devaluation of Christ's Humanity is artistically destructive in other ways, as well. For instance, an improper view of the Lord Jesus' Emotions And His Imagination (intrinsic as they are to His Humanity) leads to both an improper view of the value of human emotion and imagination (leading to a deformed representation of men in worship and the arts, and to a mistrust of the arts as legitimate and an inability to correctly understand and execute what Scripture prescribes).

Likewise, such a non-Biblical devaluation of these Aspects of Jesus' Humanity can extend as well to His Sensual Nature, Which, as a Human, He possessed, as do all humans. The five senses (taste, touch, smell, hearing, and sight) are necessarily a part of embodied humanity (since humans do possess bodies which are one part of who humans are), and the Lord Jesus, Who has redeemed all that He assumed, in order to be a Perfect Sacrifice for the sins of fallen humanity, and Who was an Embodied Human, necessarily possessed these senses.

There has long been a strain of suspicion of the senses in Christianity, which owes its existence to two things. The first is rooted in Neo-Platonic distrust of the physical, material realm as being inherently at odds with the spiritual realm, a distrust transmitted to the Early Church via biases of Neo-Platonically-educated Christians.

The second contributory to suspicion of the senses (especially amongst Evangelicals) is due to a Pietistic overreaction to the very real problem of sensualism, the illicit worship of the senses seen in hedonism, gluttony, and so forth. The Pietist response to these sinful patterns of behavior is to throw the baby out with the bath-water, and seek to suppress the senses as much as possible.

However, Scripture itself tells us that the physical (which necessarily includes the sensual) is the arena of spirituality, as Rom. 12:1-2 makes clear when Paul urges Christians to present their bodies (including perforce their senses) as "living sacrifices, holy, acceptable to God, your spiritual service." We are not called to obliterate our humanity, but to see it oriented to righteousness by the Spirit's Power, to use our gifts (sensual and otherwise) correctly.

We see this especially illumined in the Sinless Life of Christ, Who exhibited use of His Senses as a Holy and Necessary Part of His Redemptive Human Activity, since All of Who He was and What He did was offered for our sins in His Atonement on the Cross.

The Bible teaches us that Jesus tasted (Mt. 27:34), and exercised sight (Mark 3:16; 4:18), the sense of touch (Luke 5:13; 7:14), and of hearing (Matt.4:12; Luke 7:9), all as part of His Sinless Human Existence. His Sinless Exercise of His Sensual Nature shows us that a godly exercise of our own senses is both possible and necessary for our sanctification if we are to imitate our Lord.

A suspicion of the senses inhibits both the creation of Christian art and worship (since both are unavoidably concerned with sensual exercise). To despise the Sensual Nature of Christ's Incarnation inevitably leads to the paucity of Christian artistic expression such as we sadly experience in our time.

[kempercrabb.net]

Guest editorial by Chad Johnson

Let God Fight

While on Come&Live!'s recent trip to New Zealand, we received the wonderful testimony of how God had used a verse to speak promise to our friend's sister, diagnosed with the same early genetic signs that had taken their mother's life a few years prior. She had received an alarming doctor's report but then set her heart on hope. Many prayed. She called us while we were overseas to tell us that the follow-up report with the same doctor had shown NO signs of the disease. In awe, the doctor asked her what she had been doing. Her response? "I've been asking Jesus for a miracle." The doctor responded with an affirmative, "I think you've received your miracle." The mercy and power of a living, breathing God.

Still a sobering reality are the times where people do not instantly experience God's manifest presence. Where the miraculous healing is anything but immediate. When God doesn't seem to move as we anticipate, we often try to force His hand. Truth is, many of us are guilty. Our guilt comes from the assumption that God needs help in the fight. That we can aid a battle God offered to wage for us. Ideas are pondered; "Maybe Jesus is not enough. The Holy Spirit requires my counsel. If I muster some incredible and supernatural level of mega-seed faith, God might move. Pressure. Pressure. Pressure." Faith is a key ingredient to God moving, Hebrews 11 makes that clear. But faith is also a gift and comes by hearing the Word of God. Want more faith? Ask Him. Read, know and apply Scripture.

Moses stood firm even in the midst of the gravest obstacle he had ever faced. God had just released His people from Pharaoh's hand. But He wasn't finished. He desired ALL glory over Egypt. Pharaoh and his army pursue the Israelites and find them stuck. No place to run or hide. Death and slavery drooling at their doors. The Israelites cry out to God, then they accuse their leader of having a horrible plan.

Moses stands, speaking to their fears with the promise that God will deliver. He says, "The Lord will fight for you, and you shall hold your peace." (Exodus 14:14)

Twelve words that are often overlooked and misunderstood. Could we believe that God desires to fight for us far more than we desire for Him to do the fighting? Some have said that faith is spelled RISK. Although true, I'd wager to say that faith is more often spelled PEACE. Peace surpasses all our understanding and it guards our hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. When the outcome tarries, peace keeps us grounded. Truth remains and it empowers us. Faith in the storm is saying to the waves, "Peace. Be still."

We have a choice to make. If we choose faith then we must accept the greater reality, that no matter what we are feeling, thinking or experiencing, God is fighting for us and we shall hold our peace! Peace kills fear. It destroys doubt and unbelief. Peace induces joy. Let go of pressure – choose to let God do your fighting. He is coming. He will deliver you!

—Chad Johnson
Come&Live!

Devotions with Greg Tucker

"The last will be first, and the first will be last."
The words of Jesus, Matthew 20:16

It's always been my least favorite story.

It's about a group of men trying to make an honest living. They're your basic, hardworking Home Depot day laborers – you've seen them – they've been there since dawn, and they're thrilled when a rancher offers $100 for eight hours of work. So they jump in the back of his truck, thrilled with their good fortune.

But good feelings leave when the boss man delivers another group of workers to the worksite at 4:00, and at 5:00 he proceeds to pay them the same wage. The early risers were incensed. "We picked truckloads of grapes, and those turkeys only filled one or two buckets – and they get the same money? THAT'S NOT RIGHT!" Their complaint is met with logic any business owner can appreciate: "Isn't it my money? Can't I do with it as I choose?"

Jesus told of such an event in Matthew 20, and he ended by sharing his logic: In heaven, the first will be last, and the last will be first.

That bothers me. It flies in the face of everything else I've been told to believe. The early bird gets the worm, right? "No pain, no gain" is a lesson I've taught my kids.

But Jesus isn't talking about fairness, or a man's work ethic. He's talking about grace.

For believers, grace means this: God gives us a gift we don't deserve. But most of us don't understand grace, because we live in a world that says if you work hard and do good work, you'll get the job, make the team, receive the prize. That's a process we understand.

Personally, I've been doing this Christian thing a long time, and I've made sacrifices. I've studied the Bible, I've given to the needy. Why, I even led a hitchhiker to Jesus last week! So I'm confident there are going to be some pretty great rewards waiting for me when I arrive in heaven. My mansion had better be huge, and right next to an Apple Store. Because I've earned it.

But God says, "If Greg Tucker gets to heaven, it won't be because of anything he's done or anything he's given. It will be solely because my Son died on a cross so his sin could be forgiven today and forgotten forever. He's saved because he wanted to be friends with Me."

Jesus made it possible! The fact is, He made it possible for anyone who wants that relationship. So even if you jumped in the back of his pickup truck five minutes ago, you're going to get the same blessing, the same eternal reward as someone who's known God his or her whole life. Someone who comes late to the game might think, "There's no way I deserve all that."

Ah, but that's grace – God giving us a gift we don't deserve.

Greg Tucker president of Tucker Signature Films in Beverly Hills.
You can write him at TuckerG@mac.com

PICK OF THE LITTER

☆ The Shiny Darks

These guys (and a gal on drums) caught my eye a few years ago at an Objective event in Nashville with their brash old school punk attack. Their newest EP, *Stab At Love*, is quite addictive. They played an energetic set at this year's HM Magazine Showcase during SXSW, which they got bouncing right away by opening with a cover of the Ramones' classic, "Blitzkreig Bop." As a whole, their catalog can be a little hit and miss, but their hits are amazing and spot-on (like the title-track and "I Wanna Be A Kennedy"), which are usually driven by a romping bass line and held together tightly by this trio. (Doug Van Pelt)
theshinydarks.com

☆ Timbre

This talented harpist is known for guesting on mewithoutYou albums, yet she keeps cranking out great songs on her own. Her new *Little Flowers* album is varied and dynamic, thanks to choir parts in some songs. Amazing chill music. It can be astonishing how heavy and dark stringed instruments and voices can be, as the epic tune "Spinning Plates" proves. (DV)
timbremusic.net

My Heart's Cry

This band's been around awhile, but their *Prayer of the Saints* EP really shows a jump in songwriting excellence and performance. They often use their strengths to bring dynamics to their songs, like clean modern rock verses that get gritty in the heavier choruses. (DV)
myspace.com/myheartscryband

Grandpa Loves Rhinos

Energetic modern rock with edge, urgency and lots of melody in the right places. Nice and tight rhythm section. (DV)
myspace.com/grandpalovesrhinos

An Epic No Less

Super clean and sweet pop, melding bouncing keyboards with just the right lilting vocals and smart percussion. Very worship-oriented lyrics. (DV)
anepicnoless.com

Godscare

An awesome mixture of monster rock with rollicking keys, low, gothic vocals and a steady punk rock beat. When they slow it down, like the tune "Woe to the Crown," it gets creepy. Love the approach and delivery. (DV)
godscare.com

Holiday At Sea

Great instrumentation. Reminds me at times of early emo bands like Mineral meets Explosions in the Sky. (DV)
holidayatsea.net

☆ Hooray For Love

This Houston worship band delivers something fresh on their self-titled 5-song EP. I think it's the electronic pop keys and the restraint shown in not chasing the typical chiming guitar sounds found everywhere else in a scene called "modern worship." (DV)
hoorayforlove.net

Shaken

Hard-edged rock. And it's no wonder they sound good. Their *New Beginning* 5-song EP was produced by Travis Wyrick. RIYL Disciple, Red. (DV)
myspace.com/shakenband

Jack Marques

This guitarist excels at playing and songwriting, which is always a good combination ... but especially helpful with straight-up rock. Catchy, melodic choruses stick around awhile after the songs end. (DV)
jackmarques.com

Do You See The Dark

Good female-fronted hard rock. Tough, edgy with all the right guitar tones. The band really complements each instrument and sound well. (DV)
doyouseethedark.com

Memnoir

Nice and doomy modern rock with killer production in the vein of Head, Breaking Benjamin, Linkin Park. The 6-song EP, *Canto Vol. I* has lightly risque artwork for the tune "Confession." (DV)
memnoir.com

☆ Abraham The Poor

Amazing, brooding, contemplative and beautiful ... and I'm not talking just about the music. The soft yet stomping layered and textured indie rock stylings are all that, but the artwork and packaging in *After the Flood, Into the Wild* (24-page booklet!) enhance the experience - just like the big vinyl gatefolds of old, only smaller. (DV)
abrahamthepoor.bandcamp.com

THE BLAST.FM
Always Aggressive, Always Progressive.
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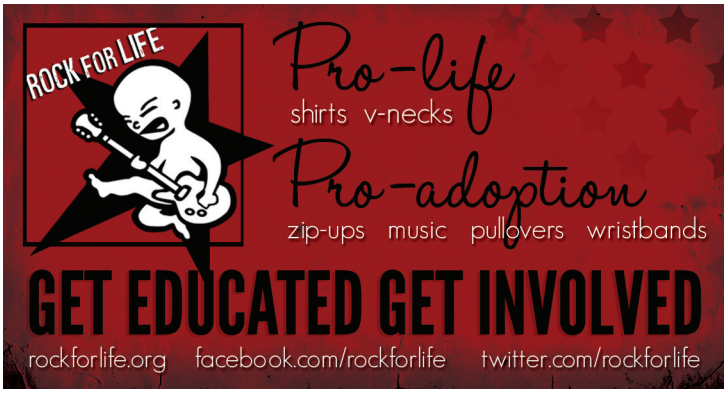
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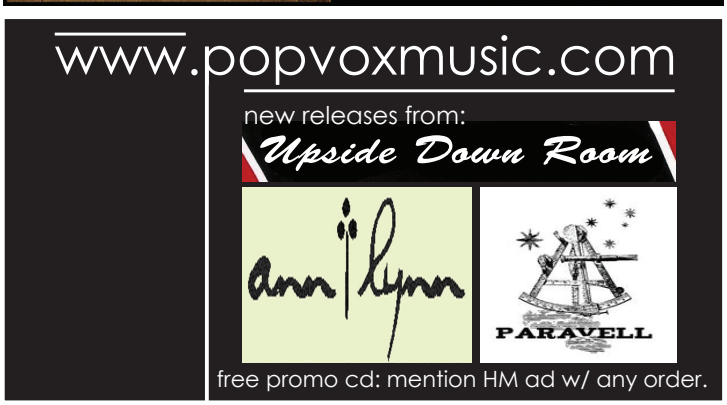
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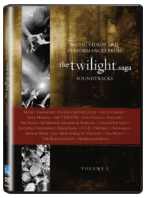
SOCIAL NETWORK

This amazing story is one that had to be told on the big screen. It's amazing, yet painful at times, to peer into the social ineptitude of the founder of our most-used social network. It both reinforces the "genius is above the law" mindset and tears it down with blunt force. Compelling. [Columbia Pictures] *Doug Van Pelt*

[Cuss: 35 | Gore: 0 | Sex: 0.2 | Spiritual Conversations: 60]

THE TWILIGHT SAGA SOUNDTRACKS



You know all those bands that scored big on the coattails of the Twilight series? Well, someone had the novel idea of compiling 20 of the promo music videos on a DVD. It views like a Who's Who of hip, indie rock, but the "Spotlight" video of MUTEMATH is practically worth the price of admission alone. [Summit Entertainment] *DV*

[Cuss: 0 | Gore: 0 | Sex: 0 | Spiritual Conversations: 30]

THE THIRD TESTAMENT

Some movies go to great measures to suspend the belief of the viewer. Some just assume you'll follow right along. This one resorts to a confusing "is it a documentary or not?" *Blair Witch* approach. A missing man is the sub-plot behind a conspiracy regarding new text in the canon of Scripture. Intriguing subject matter, but not much else. [Magdaline Pictures] *DV*

[Cuss: 6 | Gore: 0 | Sex: 3 | Spiritual Conversations: 100]

THE GRANDFATHERS

Third in a trilogy about the martyrdom of Jim Elliot and friends (following *Beyond the Gates of Splendor* and *End of the Spear*)... A pro documentary with plenty of ups and downs in the narration, it sheds light on a different angle of this amazing story (the two grandsons on both sides of these two people groups). [EGM Media] *DV* [Cuss: 0 | Gore: 0 | Sex: 0 | Spiritual Conversations: 100]

DROPS LIKE STARS | ROB BELL

This creative presentation of author/speaker Rob Bell talking to is like a glorified college lecture, but the content in this DVD/book set is absolutely compelling. Short vignettes are shared that cut to the point. There's depth here ... so much so that the book is "better" than the DVD. [Zondervan] *DV*

THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA: ...DAWN TREADER

It's so awesome that this epic novel series has been translated to the big screen. The sum is probably greater than its parts, but this one is still a wonderful tale of courage, introspection, hope, family and love with plenty of funny creatures to behold. [Fox Home Video] *DV*

[Cuss: 0 | Gore: 0 | Sex: 0 | Spiritual Conversations: 100]

ZOOM H1 HANDY RECORDER

Kudos to the Zoom Corporation for developing a high quality audio recorder with simple and standard operating settings (like saving onto a removable Micro SD card in either .wav or .mp3 format). It performs like a champ and its handy (and space age X-Y mic placement) design is rugged enough for real-world use. Future HM Magazine Podcast episodes are already benefiting from this device. [zoom.co.jp] *DV* [Setup Ease: A | Performance: A | Price: $99]

THIS DAY IN LED ZEPPELIN

Another example of how customized and specialized apps can be with the right creative minds at the helm. This little bugger has interesting and detailed facts on this legendary band for each calendar day; trivia; trivia quiz; and in-depth song notes for their entire catalog. Rated 12+ for mild references to drug use. [This Day in Music Apps] *DV* [Setup Ease: A | Performance: B+ | Price: $3]

SCULPTEO

Whether you're an ego-maniac like me or want to collect a small figurine of someone you have front and profile photos of, now you can get a small 3-D sculpture with a wad of cash. It's amazing how the laser sculpturing technology can nail the details pretty well. [sculpteo.com] *DV* [Setup Ease: A | Performance: B+ | Price: $74]

FOOT & CALF MASSAGER HT-1350

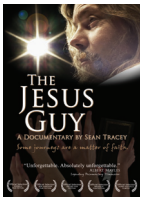
This device is part of the more affordable options from these massage chair specialists. The circular motion that the calves get and the stimulating massage to the bottom of the feet are immediately comforting. While not silent, it's fairly quiet and can fit under a desk. [humantouch.com] *DV* [Setup Ease: A+ | Performance: A | Price: $399]

I MAKE MY CASE

I think the best cases for smart phones are slim, slick and "almost not there." Who wants additional bulk on their device? Case-Mate has realized this and developed customizable cases for the iPhone 4 with music artwork ... and a nifty DIY option, too (allowing you to upload your own artwork). [case-mate.com] *DV*

[Setup Ease: A+ | Performance: A | Price: $34]

THE JESUS GUY



Sometimes documentaries can only be as compelling as its subject matter. Fortunately for this one, this roaming missionary with long hair, beard and sandals is quite that. This guy mysteriously took on the name "What's Your Name" as his moniker, which got under the skin of lots of skeptics he came across. It was nice to see his balanced approach. "I don't think I'm Jesus. This is not an act." He simply took the "Go ... and take nothing for your provisions" instruction in Scripture at face value. Interviews with others create quite a balanced and up-close portrait of this guy. I liked how he told mocking kids at a school to "show respect." He answered questions politely, with thought and conviction. [Cinevolve] *DV*

[Cuss: 0 | Gore: 0 | Sex: 0 | Spiritual Conversations: 100]

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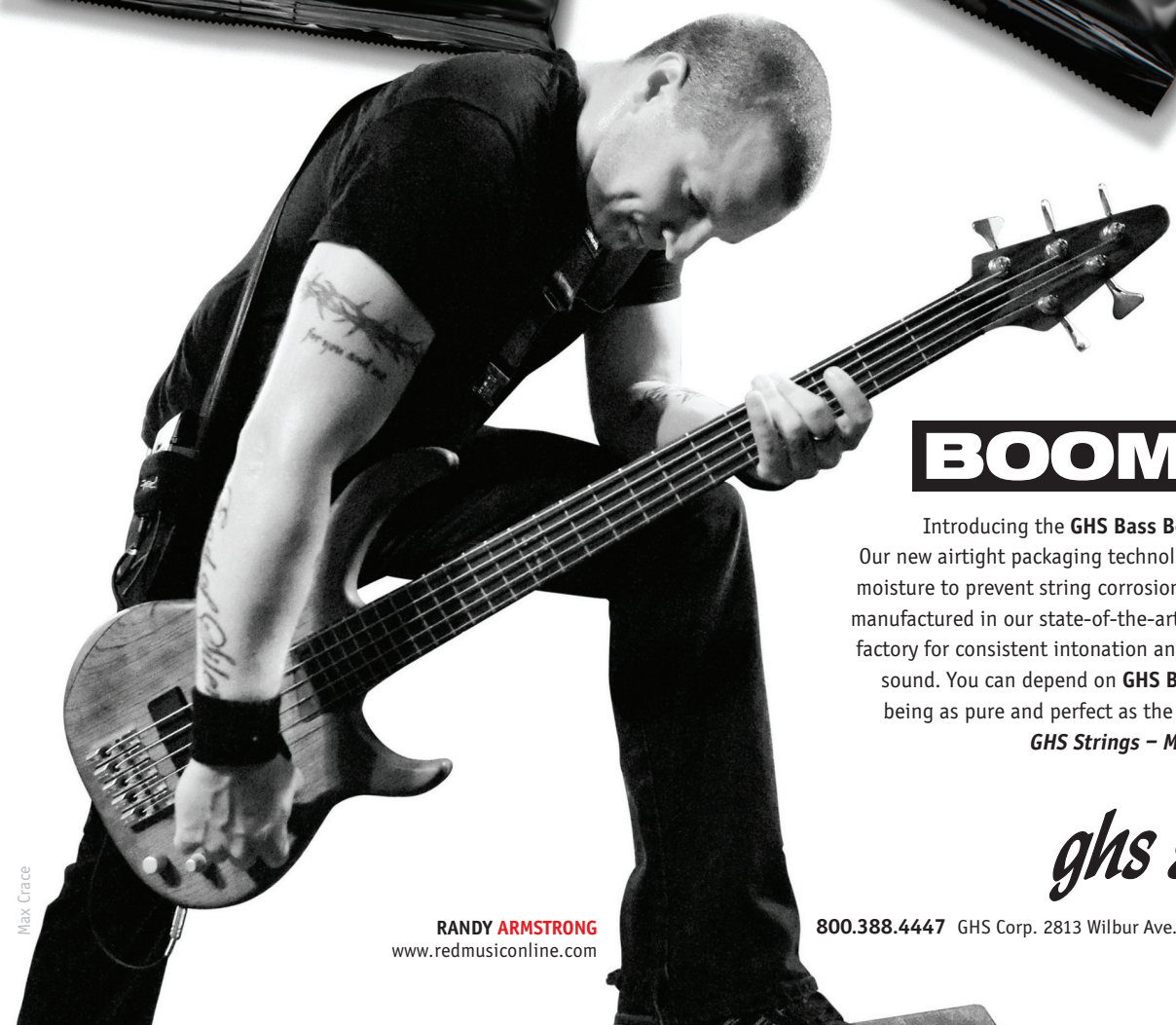

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HM

HM Magazine, along with our readers, would like to say "THANK YOU" to **Haste the Day** for 10 amazing years.

God bless all of you guys...

ONE LAST LIVE REPORT

The last Haste the Day show in Texas

February 11

REVIEW BY ROB SHAMELESS PHOTOS BY DOUG VAN PELT

February 11th 2011 (Dallas, TX) Haste The Day "The Farewell Tour" was a bitter sweet night for a lot of us. Having three bands send off Haste The Day in a great fashion. A Plea For Purging, The Chariot, and My Children My Bride. All three bands who know how to bring "The Party."

There was a line that was around the block and fans where still pouring in as **A Plea For Purging** took the stage. This amazing band from the music city always puts on a great show. They played a great set with songs from their last two records including fan favorites "The Eternal Female" "Shiver," "Holocausts" and always ending with "Malevolence." With singer Andy Atkins calling for more head bangs. Along with calling out Matthew Hasting (singer of MCMB) to do a wall of death during their set. "We are all about the party," said Atkins, and do they ever know how to get a party started.

Up next was **The Chariot**. This band brings back the chaordic (chaos within order) punk rock show. With a paper cut out of their bass player Wolf, who was at a friend's wedding that night, the show did not skip a beat. Josh Scogin's calling Dallas his favorite city besides his home town Atlanta he opened the set with his opening line "They call us The Chariot, this song is called Back to Back," then a stage dive into the crowd. This band is never a disappointment. Every time I see them they always know how to take the show to the next level. At one point in the set guitarist Stephen Harrison played guitar in the crowd. Both band members and fans losing their minds. Fans jumping on stage for the end of "The City" and friends joining in on the drum circle at the end of "Daggers" with Plea's drummer Arron diving in the crowd while catching a tom tom. There are so many things to talk about, and so little time to talk about the craziness of The Chariot.

The party raged on when **MyChildren MyBride** took the stage. These boys always put a smile on my face. They know how to have a good time. With only two albums under their belt they play a great mix of new and old songs. While dedicating their new single "King of The Hopeless" to Texas straight edge and Texas hardcore, drummer Noah Boyce of Dallas' own hardcore band Messengers stage dived and threw up his X. In classic fashion the boys ended their set with "Headshot." They had a new headshot shirt for this tour that is a Shepard Fairey tribute to his breakout "Andre the giant has a posse" sticker.

At last we ended the night with the farewell of **Haste The Day**. This band with ten years behind them end on a great note. They had a surprise guest appearance by Micah Kinard of Oh, Sleeper on "The Place That Most Deny." Playing a wide arranged set from all five records, my personal favorites being the first two records... It was a great to see a band end on a good note. For me I'm glad when a band calls it a day when the time comes and it is the right thing to do. Most bands don't make it to ten years and to end it on that note is a good day by me. With hugs and tears from fans letting the band know how much they have meant in their life, it was over for us. Haste The Day will always be a band that we will look back on and will never forget.

All photos from the Austin, TX, show (obviously).

WE COMMISSIONED NICK AND MATTHEW {OF THIS MOMENT IN HARDCORE} TO SIT DOWN WITH THE **HASTE THE DAY** GUYS AT THE **RICHMOND, VA**, STOP ON THEIR FAREWELL TOUR. THEY CORNERED STEPHEN KEECH, MIKE MURPHY AND ORIGINAL GUITAR PLAYER BRENNAN CHAULK FOR THE FOLLOWING DISCUSSION…

Right before seeing Haste the Day in Richmond, Virginia, we had the opportunity to go to dinner and do an epic interview for their farewell tour. It was one of the most emotional shows ever. We got to know them on a more personal level which made it just a little more sad to know that we would never hear their classic sound live again. Haste the Day has conquered the scene for ten years and written some of the most memorable songs ever to be released in the scene. We're going to miss them and we're going to miss their music. It's sad to see them go, especially because there aren't many bands like Haste left out there. Most of the bands that are around are because of inspirations like Haste the Day. We would just like to thank them for all of their hard work, endless hours of touring and recording, and for all the great music they've made over the years. Here are the final words and thoughts of Haste the Day before they bid farewell.

Nick: So, recap why the band is breaking up for those who didn't read it on the site.
Mike: It's not one specific reason. We felt like Haste the Day had done what we set out to do in the beginning which was to make awesome music and spread hope in the hardcore scene. We felt that we put out our best record with *Attack of the Wolf King* and we didn't really want to follow it up. I mean I'm getting older and I don't really want to headbang anymore. We still love Haste the Day and still love playing heavy music, but I personally felt my passion kind of going away and I didn't want to go on auto pilot and keep going just for the sake of going. I still love heavy music, but my passion for touring is drying up. It's harder being away and the scene is generally different from when we started playing. I feel that this season of my life is ending and this feels right.

Matt: Any regrets that you guys have had for the past ten years? What has Haste the Day done wrong that you wish you hadn't?
Brennan: My biggest regret was how I left. I left in the middle of tour. I was getting married and I jumped out. It definitely threw off the tour and I wish that I had done that differently.

Nick: Any lessons you'd want to pass on to other bands?
Mike: Play anywhere you can. We played birthday parties, attics and basements. Take every opportunity you can to play. We've played for, like, five people before, but we're not above that. Go out and play everywhere you can.

Steve: I remember my first band played a graduation party and it was probably the most awkward experience of our lives. There were, like, three kids who wanted to hear the music and then a ton of old people who seemed really bummed that they were there. The mom gave us two hundred dollars, but then we returned (it) in secret because we didn't feel like we earned it.

Matt: What is something about HTD that fans don't know unless they ask you?
Brennan: We're a Christian band!

Matt: Wow. Shocking!

Mike: Okay. So when Brennan was in the band his vocals were tracked on the albums.

Steve: Actually in the studio I sang all of his parts.

Nick: Do you guys have any plans for another band after this?
Steve: I want to do a lot of chill stuff. Like one day I woke up and I realized I wasn't really angry anymore. I was on stage one night yelling at these kids and they were yelling back at me and I was like, "I am NOT mad at you! I don't understand why we're so angry right now!" It really gave me a passion to play more happy go-lucky music. I've been writing music like that since before I started playing heavy music. It's very Beatles inspired.

Matt: What was your favorite album you wrote and what influenced the sound at that time?
Steve: *Attack of the Wolf King*. The thing that made that album so great is that there were five different influences! We pulled those things all together and the album came out perfect. It was heavy and atmospheric. It flowed and came out wonderfully.

Brennan: As a fan I agree it really was the best album. It's different from what Haste usually does, but it's still got the Haste the Day flare. I know that I wasn't excited to love it, but it truly was a brilliant album.

Nick: What's it like being on tour with secular bands? Does it raise any conflict?
Steve: I feel like it's the same. People are people. You can have the same problem touring with a Christian band as touring with a secular band. There are Christian bands out there, unfortunately that are no different than secular bands. It's just a label to sell records. I'm not saying that all Christian bands are bad, but there isn't really much of a difference. Some of our best friends are not Christians and I think that *that's* where our ministry lies. I believe that we should inform these people to what we believe. We believe in God and trust in the Holy Spirit and we hope that through those relationships we can be there for them. We hope that God would move on their hearts.

Matt: You recently did a reunion show where you also recorded a DVD in your hometown tell us how that went.
Mike: It was really fun. We played almost two hours. It was one of the craziest shows I'd ever been to. The crowd was singing along to parts that we had never heard them sing to before. There were tons of people from all around the US coming to see this show. Before the show we all got together and prayed and we just had a good fellowship.

Steve: It felt like we were more than a band. It felt like we were part of something incredible. It was humbling and just awesome. After the show there were kids just lined up crying. It was one of the most emotional nights of my life. There were actually kids that told us that Haste the Day changed their lives and some that even said Haste saved their lives! I know that it's not Haste the Day that saves lives, it's Christ moving through the music. We're just another hardcore band, but God takes that and uses that to change lives.

Matt: Mike, you've been in the band since the beginning. Do you feel Haste has changed? If so, was it for good or bad and how so?
Mike: Yeah it's definitely changed. Not being around the same group of guys is different. But the purpose of Haste the Day has always been the same. I guess the biggest thing is that through the member changes and overcoming the challenges has forced me to grow up and not find my identity in others, but in Christ and who He wants me to be. You have to step out of your comfort zone and you have to rely on the Lord. As far as style goes we started out pretty hardcore, but it became more melodic. When Stephen joined the band got darker and more ambient. The evolution from our EP to *Attack of the Wolf King* is perfect to me, because it took all the good parts of all the records and made it all make sense on the last record.

Nick: What is the weirdest thing you've ever seen on tour?
Brennan: Not appropriate.

Nick: Second weirdest?
Brennan: Not even close to appropriate.

Nick: Tenth weirdest?
Mike: Well, on this tour I've seen a banana stage dive and Spongebob stage dive … all in one night.

Stephen: On the road you see a lot of weird things, both appropriate and inappropriate.

Mike: I'll say this and leave it at this. You don't always have time to make a bathroom stop...
(Everyone goes eeeeeeeeewwwwwwwww)

Nick: Tell us something you'll never forget while being in Haste the Day. Is this appropriate?
Stephen: well there are still a lot of things going on in my mind that I will NEVER forget.

Mike: I'll never forget when we first started touring and we played an out of state show and people started singing along to one of our songs. It was pretty mind blowing. Or when we got our first t-shirt; we had won battle of the bands in high school and we got our t-shirts made. It said Haste the Day in cursive with roses under it. And, of course, I'll never forget going international. Hearing kids sing your songs in a different language is kinda amazing.

Matt: A lot of members have left the band over the years, where are they now?
Brennan: I'm here. My brother Devon is a senior pastor in Indiana. Jimmy is in Trenches and works for a church as well. I'm serving tables at a restaurant called The Melting Pot, so I make a lot of cheese and just work out a lot.

Mike: That's a joke. Put lol after that.

Matt: Working out at 25-hour fitness!

Mike: 25-hour cheeseburger fitness. Print it!

Nick: Done and done!
Brennan: Jason was in the band for a while. He's a bartender in Indianapolis now.

Mike: And we're all still really good friends.

Stephen: Except that Jimmy and I still hate each other.

Nick: Really?
Stephen: Joke. We like to joke about that. Jimmy and I love each other.

Nick: What are your thoughts on Jimmy's band, Trenches?
Mike: It's cool stuff. They put out the one record and that's all they've really done. I think Jimmy just needed an outlet. The music is kinda like Isis and Deftones-y influenced.

Stephen: It's like if you took a Haste the Day record and put it on vinyl and slowed it down to like half – that would be Trenches. It's super boring and we hate it… That's a joke.

Nick: As of right now, do you guys have any plans for a reunion show?
Mike: It's December 1st 2027. I am for real. It's in Indiana. Stephen will not be there. We're gonna track Brennan's vocals again and I'm going to be the only one there. This is a joke. There is no reunion show as of right now. Little early to say!

Matt: Well, if you did do one, who would you want to play with?
Mike: Living Sacrifice reunion, Zao reunion, Beloved reunion, Still Remains reunion, and Slick Shoes. I say reunion because all of these bands will be broken up by December 1st 2027. Actually, speaking of Still Remains, they will be playing a reunion show at our very last show in Indianapolis, so that's pretty awesome.

Matt: How has Solid State treated you over the years?
Mike: Excellent. It was our dream label since we were kids. We loved Solid State and we'd buy every release that came out no matter what came out! It was the dream label and everyone treated us so well. It's a solid label that stands for solid things… it's SOLID state. I didn't even mean to do that. They were a wonderful family to us.

Matt: What are some heartfelt emotions/messages that you'd like to tell the fans?
Mike: We're so thankful for our fans. It's an honor for someone (to) let you be a part of their life. Growing up listening to bands ... I idolized bands. Their songs become the soundtrack to that time of my life when something was hard. To create music and to be a part of someone's life like that is an honor and we don't take that for granted. It's a big deal and we appreciate them as people. We love them deeply and genuinely and it's been an honor to write this music. Thank you fans for all of the wonderful support.

Matt: Well to wrap this up how can we pray for you?
Brennan: Direction. I've been out of the band for a few years now and I'm still waiting to see where God's gonna put me next. I think that's the prayer for everybody in the band.

Mike: Same thing. My mom always said when I first started touring she was always worried that when it was over, would I be able to be a "normal" guy.

Stephen: I think it is gonna be weird trying to adapt to normal society. We all need direction and patience in waiting to hear God's voice. We need to keep in tune to God's voice so we don't grow dry or stagnant.

Nick: Any last messages that you want published for HM?
Mike: We would like to say that Stephen is a million times better at vocals than Jimmy. LOVE YA JIMMY! PRINT THAT!

✖

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